

ARTORNISH CASTLE.

Dimly arose the Castle's form,
And deepened shadows made.

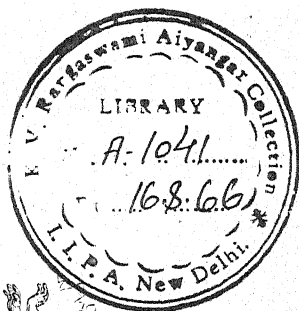
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POETICAL WORKS

OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

VOL. II.



CHARGE OF THE CARRICK SPEARMEN.

Lord of the Isles, page 375.

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ROKEBY:

A POEM, IN SIX CANTOS.



TO JOHN B. S. MORRITT, Esq.

THIS POEM,

THE SCENE OF WHICH IS LAID IN HIS BEAUTIFUL DEMESNE OF ROKEBY,

IS INSCRIBED, IN TOKEN OF SINCERE FRIENDSHIP,

BY

WALTER SCOTT.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE FIRST EDITION.

The Scene of this Poem is laid at Rokeby, near Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire, and shifts to the adjacent Fortress of Barnard Castle, and to other places in that Vicinity.

The Time occupied by the Action is a space of Five Days, Three of which are supposed to elapse between the end of the Fifth and the beginning of the Sixth Canto.

The Date of the supposed events is immediately subsequent to the great Battle of Marston Moor, 3d July 1644. This period of public confusion has been chosen, without any purpose of combining the Fable with the Military or Political Events of the Civil War, but only as affording a degree of probability to the Fictitious narrative now presented to the Public.

INTRODUCTION TO ROKEBY

EDITION 1830.

BETWEEN the publication of "The Lady of the Lake," which was so eminently successful, and that of "Rokeby," in 1813, three years had intervened. I shall not, I believe, be accused of ever having attempted to usurp a superiority over many men of genius, my contemporaries; but, in point of popularity, not of actual talent, the caprice of the public had certainly given me such a temporary superiority over men, of whom in regard to poetical fancy and feeling, I scarcely thought myself worthy to loose the shoe-latch. On the other hand, it would be absurd affectation in me to deny, that I conceived myself to understand, more perfectly than many of my contemporaries, the manner most likely to interest the great mass of mankind. Yet, even with this belief, I must truly and fairly say, that I always considered myself rather as one who held the bets, in time to be paid over to the winner, than as having any pretence to keep them in my own right.

In the meantime years crept on, and not without their usual depredations on the passing generation. My sons had arrived at the age when the paternal home was no longer their best abode, as both were destined to active life. The field-sports, to which I was peculiarly attached, had now less interest, and were replaced by other amusements of a more quiet character; and the means and opportunity of pursuing these were to be sought for. I had, indeed, for some years attended to farming, a knowledge of which is, or at least was then, indispensable to the comfort of a family residing in a solitary country-house; but although this was the favourite amusement of many of my friends, I have never been able to consider it as a source of pleasure. I never could think it a matter of passing importance, that my cattle, or crops, were better or more plentiful than those of my neighbours, and nevertheless I began to feel the necessity of some more quiet out-door occupation, different from those I had hitherto pursued. I purchased a small farm of about one hundred acres, with the purpose of planting and improving it, to which property circumstances afterwards enabled me to make considerable additions; and thus an era took place in my life, almost equal to the important one mentioned by the Vicar of Wakefield, when he removed from the Blue-room to the Brown. In point of neighbourhood, at least, the change of residence made little *more* difference. Abbotsford, to which we removed, was only six or seven miles down the Tweed, and lay on the same beautiful stream. It did not possess the romantic character of Ashiestiel, my former residence; but it

had a stretch of meadow-land along the river, and possessed, in the phrase of the landscape-gardener, considerable capabilities. Above all, the land was my own, like Uncle Toby's Bowling-green, to do what I would with. It had been, though the gratification was long postponed, an early wish of mine to connect myself with my mother-earth, and prosecute those experiments by which a species of creative power is exercised over the face of nature. I can trace, even to childhood, a pleasure derived from Dodsley's account of Shenstone's Leasowes, and I envied the poet much more for the pleasure of accomplishing the objects detailed in his friend's sketch of his grounds, than for the possession of pipe, crook, flock, and Phillis to boot. My memory, also, tenacious of quaint expressions, still retained a phrase which it had gathered from an old almanack of Charles the Second's time, (when every thing down to almanacks affected to be smart,) in which the reader, in the month of June, is advised, for health's sake, to walk a mile or two every day before breakfast, and, if he can possibly so manage, to let his exercise be taken upon his own land.

With the satisfaction of having attained the fulfilment of an early and long cherished-hope, I commenced my improvements, as delightful in their progress as those of the child who first makes a dress for a new doll. The nakedness of the land was in time hidden by woodlands of considerable extent—the smallest of possible cottages was progressively expanded into a sort of dream of a mansion-house, whimsical in the exterior, but convenient within. Nor did I forget what is the natural pleasure of every man who has been a reader, I mean the filling the shelves of a tolerably large library. All these objects I kept in view, to be executed as convenience should serve; and, although I knew many years must elapse before they could be attained, I was of a disposition to comfort myself with the Spanish proverb, "Time and I against any two."

The difficult and indispensable point, of finding a permanent subject of occupation, was now at length attained; but there was annexed to it the necessity of becoming again a candidate for public favour; for, as I was turned improver on the earth of the every-day world, it was under condition that the small tenement of Parnassus, which might be accessible to my labours, should not remain uncultivated.

I meditated, at first, a poem on the subject of Bruce, in which I made some progress, but afterwards judged it advisable to lay it aside, supposing that an English story might have more novelty; in consequence, the precedence was given to "Rokeby."

If subject and scenery could have influenced the fate of a poem, that of "Rokeby" should have been eminently distinguished; for the grounds belong to a dear friend, with whom I had lived in habits of intimacy for many years, and the place itself united the romantic beauties of the wilds of Scotland with the rich and smiling aspect of the southern portion of the island. But the Cavaliers and Roundheads, whom I attempted to summon up to tenant this beautiful region, had for the public neither the novelty nor the peculiar interest of the primitive Highlanders. This, perhaps, was scarcely to be expected, considering that the general mind sympathises readily and at once with the stamp which nature herself has affixed upon the manners of a people living in a simple

and patriarchal state; whereas it has more difficulty in understanding or interesting itself in manners founded upon those peculiar habits of thinking or acting, which are produced by the progress of society. We could read with pleasure the tale of the adventures of a Cossack or a Mongol Tartar, while we only wonder and stare over those of the lovers in the "Pleasing Chinese History," where the embarrassments turn upon difficulties arising out of unintelligible delicacies peculiar to the customs and manners of that affected people.

The cause of my failure had, however, a far deeper root. The manner, or style, which, by its novelty, attracted the public in an unusual degree, had now, after having been three times before them, exhausted the patience of the reader, and began in the fourth to lose its charms. The reviewers may be said to have apostrophized the author in the language of Farnell's Edwin:—

"And here reverse the charm, he cries,
And let it fairly now suffice,
The gambol has been shown."

The licentious combination of rhymes, in a manner not perhaps very congenial to our language, had not been confined to the author. Indeed, in most similar cases, the inventors of such novelties have their reputation destroyed by their own imitators, as Actæon fell under the fury of his own dogs. The present author, like Bobadil, had taught his trick of fence to a hundred gentlemen, (and ladies) who could fence very nearly, or quite, as well as himself. For this there was no remedy; the harmony became tiresome and ordinary, and both the original inventor and his invention must have fallen into contempt, if he had not found out another road to public favour. What has been said of the metre only, must be considered to apply equally to the structure of the Poem and of the style. The very best passages of any popular style are not, perhaps, susceptible of imitation, but they may be approached by men of talent; and those who are less able to copy them, at least lay hold of their peculiar features, so as to produce a strong burlesque. In either way, the effect of the manner is rendered cheap and common; and, in the latter case, ridiculous to boot. The evil consequences to an author's reputation are at least as fatal as those which come upon the musical composer, when his melody falls into the hands of the street ballad-singer.

Of the unfavourable species of imitation, the author's style gave room to a very large number, owing to an appearance of facility to which some of those who used the measure unquestionably leaned too far. The effect of the more favourable imitations, composed by persons of talent, was almost equally unfortunate to the original minstrel, by showing that they could overshoot him with his own bow. In short, the popularity which once attended the *School*, as it was called, was now fast decaying.

Besides all this, to have kept his ground at the crisis when "Rokeby" appeared, its author ought to have put forth his utmost strength, and to have possessed at least all his original advantages, for a mighty and unexpected rival was advancing on the stage—a rival not in poetical powers only, but in that art of attracting popularity, in which the present writer had hitherto

preceded better men than himself. The reader will easily see that Byron is here meant, who, after a little velitation of no great promise, now appeared as a serious candidate, in the "First two Cantos of Childe Harold." I was astonished at the power evinced by that work, which neither the "Hours of Idleness," nor the "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," had prepared me to expect from its author. There was a depth in his thought, an eager abundance in his diction, which argued full confidence in the inexhaustible resources of which he felt himself possessed; and there was some appearance of that labour of the file, which indicates that the author is conscious of the necessity of doing every justice to his work, that it may pass warrant. Lord Byron was also a traveller, a man whose ideas were fired by having seen, in distant scenes of difficulty and danger, the places whose very names are recorded in our bosoms as the shrines of ancient poetry. For his own misfortune, perhaps, but certainly to the high increase of his poetical character, nature had mixed in Lord Byron's system those passions which agitate the human heart with most violence, and which may be said to have hurried his bright career to an early close. There would have been little wisdom in measuring my force with so formidable an antagonist; and I was as likely to tire of playing the second fiddle in the concert, as my audience of hearing me. Age also was advancing. I was growing insensible to those subjects of excitation by which youth is agitated. I had around me the most pleasant but least exciting of all society, that of kind friends and an affectionate family. My circle of employments was a narrow one; it occupied me constantly, and it became daily more difficult for me to interest myself in poetical composition:—

"How happily the days of Thalaba went by!"

Yet, though conscious that I must be, in the opinion of good judges, inferior to the place I had for four or five years held in letters, and feeling alike that the latter was one to which I had only a temporary right, I could not brook the idea of relinquishing literary occupation, which had been so long my chief diversion. Neither was I disposed to choose the alternative of sinking into a mere editor and commentator, though that was a species of labour which I had practised, and to which I was attached. But I could not endure to think that I might not, whether known or concealed, do something of more importance. My inmost thoughts were those of the Trojan Captain in the galley race,—

Non jam, prima peto Mnestheus, neque vincere certo;
 Quancum O!—sed superent, quibus hoc, Neptune, dedisti;
 Extremos pudeat rediisse: hoc vincite, cives,
 Et prohibete nefas.*—ÆN. lib. v. 194.

I had, indeed, some private reasons for my "Quancum O!" which were not worse than those of Mnestheus. I have already hinted that the materials were collected for a poem on the subject

* "I seek not now the foremost palm to gain:
 Though yet—but ah! that haughty wish is vain!
 Let those enjoy it whom the gods ordain.
 But to be last, the lags of all the race!—
 Redeem yourselves and me from that disgrace."
 DRYDEN.

of Bruce, and fragments of it had been shown to some of my friends, and received with applause. Notwithstanding, therefore, the eminent success of Byron, and the great chance of his taking the wind out of my sails, there was, I judged, a species of cowardice in desisting from the task which I had undertaken, and it was time enough to retreat when the battle should be more decidedly lost. The sale of "Rokeby," excepting as compared with that of "The Lady of the Lake," was in the highest degree respectable; and as it included fifteen hundred quartos, in those quarto-reading days, the trade had no reason to be dissatisfied.

W. S.

ABBOTSFORD, *April*, 1830.

NOTICE TO EDITION 1833.

SIR WALTER SCOTT commenced the composition of *ROKEBY* at Abbotsford, on the 15th of September 1812, and finished it on the last day of the following December.

The reader may be interested with the following extracts from his letters to his friend and printer, Mr Ballantyne.

"Abbotsford, 28th Oct. 1812.

"DEAR JAMES—I send you to-day better than the third sheet of Canto II., and I trust to send the other three sheets in the course of the week. I expect that you will have three cantos complete before I quit this place—on the 11th of November. Surely, if you do your part, the poem may be out by Christmas; but you must not dandle over your typographical scruples. I have too much respect for the public to neglect any thing in my poem to attract their attention; and you misunderstood me much when you supposed that I designed any new experiments in point of composition. I only meant to say, that, knowing well that the said public will never be pleased with exactly the same thing a second time, I saw the necessity of giving a certain degree of novelty, by throwing the interest more on *character* than in my former poems, without certainly meaning to exclude either incident or description. I think you will see the same sort of difference taken in all my former poems, of which I would say, if it is fair for me to say any thing, that the force in the *Lay* is thrown on style—in *Marmion*, on description,—and in the *Lady of the Lake*, on incident."

3d November.—"As for my story, the conduct of the plot, which must be made natural and easy, prevents my introducing any thing light for some time. You must advert, that in order to give poetical effect to any incident, I am often obliged to be much

longer than I expected in the detail. You are too much like the country squire in the what d'ye call it, who commands that the play should not only be a tragedy and comedy, but that it should be crowned with a spice of your pastoral. As for what is popular, and what people like, and so forth, it is all a joke. *Be interesting*; do the thing well, and the only difference will be, that people will like what they never liked before, and will like it so much the better for the novelty of their feelings towards it. Dullness and tameness are the only irreparable faults."

December 31st.—"With kindest wishes on the return of the season, I send you the last of the copy of *Rokeby*. If you are not engaged at home, and like to call in, we will drink good luck to it; but do not derange a family party.

"There is something odd and melancholy in concluding a poem with the year, and I could be almost silly and sentimental about it. I hope you think I have done my best. I assure you of my wishes the work may succeed; and my exertions to get out in time were more inspired by your interest and John's, than my own. And so *vogue la galère*.

"W. S."



ROKEBY.

CANTO FIRST.



THE Moon is in her summer glow,
But hoarse and high the breezes blow,
And, racking o'er her face, the cloud
Varies the tincture of her shroud ;
On Barnard's towers, and Tees's stream,
She changes as a guilty dream,
When Conscience, with remorse and fear,
Goads sleeping Fancy's wild career.
Her light seems now the blush of shame,
Seems now fierce anger's darker flame,
Shifting that shade, to come and go,
Like apprehension's hurried glow ;
Then sorrow's livery dims the air,
And dies in darkness, like despair.
Such varied hues the warder sees
Reflected from the woodland Tees,
Then from old Baliol's tower looks forth,
Sees the clouds mustering in the north,
Hears, upon turret-roof and wall,

By fits the plashing rain-drop fall,
Lists to the breeze's boding sound,
And wraps his shaggy mantle round.

II.

Those towers, which in the changeful gleam
Throw murky shadows on the stream,
Those towers of Barnard hold a guest,
The emotions of whose troubled breast,
In wild and strange confusion driven,
Rival the fitting rack of heaven.
Ere sleep stern OSWALD's senses tied,
Oft had he changed his weary side,
Composed his limbs, and vainly sought
By effort strong to banish thought.
Sleep came at length, but with a train
Of feelings true and fancies vain,

Mingling; in wild disorder cast,
The expected future with the past.
Conscience, anticipating time,
Already rues the enacted crime,
And calls her furies forth, to shake
The sounding scourge and hissing snake;
While her poor victim's outward throes
Bear witness to his mental woes,
And show what lesson may be read
Beside a sinner's restless bed.

III.

Thus Oswald's labouring feelings trace
Strange changes in his sleeping face,
Rapid and ominous as these
With which the moonbeams tinge the Tees.
There might be seen of shame the blush,
There anger's dark and fiercer flush,
While the perturbed sleeper's hand
Seem'd grasping dagger-knife, or brand.
Relax'd that grasp, the heavy sigh,
The tear in the half-opening eye,
The palid cheek and brow, confess'd
That grief was busy in his breast;
Nor paused that mood—a sudden start
Impell'd the life-blood from the heart:
Features convulsed, and mutterings dread,
Show terror reigns in sorrow's stead.
That pang the painful slumber broke,
And Oswald with a start awoke.

IV.

He woke, and fear'd again to close
His eyelids in such dire repose;
He woke,—to watch the lamp, and tell
From hour to hour the castle-bell.
Or listen to the owlet's cry,
Or the sad breeze that whistles by,
Or catch, by fits, the tuneless rhyme
With which the warder cheats the time,
And envying think, how, when the sun
Bids the poor soldier's watch be done,
Couch'd on his straw, and fancy-free,
He sleeps like careless infancy.

V.

Far town-ward sounds a distant tread,
And Oswald, starting from his bed,
Hath caught it, though no human ear,
Unsharpen'd by revenge and fear,
Could e'er distinguish horse's clank,
Until it reach'd the castle bank.
Now nigh and plain the sound appears,
The warder's challenge now he hears,

Then clanking chains and levers tell,
That o'er the moat the drawbridge fell,
And, in the castle court below,
Voices are heard, and torches glow,
As marshalling the stranger's way,
Straight for the room where Oswald lay;
The cry was,—“Tidings from the host,
Of weight—a messenger comes post.”
Stifling the tumult of his breast,
His answer Oswald thus express'd—
Bring food and wine, and trim the fire;
Admit the stranger, and retire.”

VI.

The stranger came with heavy stride;
The morion's plumes his visage hide,
And the buff-coat, an ample fold,
Mantles his form's gigantic mould.²
Full slender answer deigned he
To Oswald's anxious courtesy,
But mark'd, by a disdainful smile,
He saw and scorn'd the petty wile,
When Oswald changed the torch's place,
Anxious that on the soldier's face
Its partial lustre might be thrown,
To show his looks, yet hide his own.
His guest, the while, laid low aside
The ponderous cloak of tough bull's hide,
And to the torch glanced broad and clear
The corslet of a cuirassier;
Then from his brows the casque he drew,
And from the dank plume dash'd the dew,
From gloves of mail relieved his hands,
And spread them to the kindling brands,
And, turning to the genial board,
Without a health, or pledge, or word
Of meet and social reverence said,
Deeply he drank, and fiercely fed;
As free from ceremony's sway,
As famish'd wolf that tears his prey.

VII.

With deep impatience, tinged with fear,
His host beheld him gorge his cheer,
And quaff the full carouse, that lent
His brow a fiercer hardiment.
Now Oswald stood a space aside,
Now paced the room with hasty stride,
In feverish agony to learn
Tidings of deep and dread concern,
Cursing each moment that his guest
Protracted o'er his ruffian feast.
Yet, viewing with alarm, at last,
The end of that uncouth repast,

Almost he seem'd their haste to rue,
 As, at his sign, his train withdrew,
 And left him with the stranger, free
 To question of his mystery.
 Then did his silence long proclaim
 A struggle between fear and shame.

VIII.

Much in the stranger's mien appears,
 To justify suspicious fears.
 On his dark face a scorching clime,
 And toil, had done the work of time,
 Roughen'd the brow, the temples bared,
 And sable hairs with silver shared,
 Yet left—what age alone could tame—
 The lip of pride, the eye of flame;
 The full-drawn lip that upward curl'd,
 The eye that seem'd to scorn the world.
 That lip had terror never blench'd;
 Ne'er in that eye had tear-drop quench'd
 The flash severe of swarthy glow,
 That mock'd at pain, and knew not woe.
 Inured to danger's direst form,
 Tornade and earthquake, flood and storm,
 Death had he seen by sudden blow,
 By wasting plague, by tortures slow,³
 By mine or breach, by steel or ball,
 Knew all his shapes, and scorned them all.

IX.

But yet, though BERTRAM's harden'd look
 Unmoved could blood and danger brook,
 Still worse than apathy had place
 On his swart brow and callous face;
 For evil passions, cherish'd long,
 Had plough'd them with impression strong.
 All that gives gloss to sin, all gay
 Light folly, past with youth away,
 But rooted stood, in manhood's hour,
 The weeds of vice without their flower.
 And yet the soil in which they grew,
 Had it been tamed when life was new,
 Had depth and vigour to bring forth
 The harder fruits of virtuous worth.
 Not that, e'en then, his heart had known
 The gentler feelings' kindly tone;
 But lavish waste had been refined
 To bounty in his chasten'd mind,
 And lust of gold, that waste to feed,
 Been lost in love of glory's meed,
 And, frantic then no more, his pride
 Had ta'en fair virtue for its guide.

X.

Even now, by conscience unrestrain'd,
 Clogg'd by gross vice, by slaughter stain'd,

Still knew his daring soul to soar,
 And mastery o'er the mind he bore;
 For meaner guilt, or heart less hard,
 Quail'd beneath Bertram's bold regard.
 And this felt Oswald, while in vain
 He strove, by many a winding train,
 To lure his sullen guest to show,
 Unask'd, the news he long'd to know,
 While on far other subject hung
 His heart, then falter'd from his tongue.
 Yet nought for that his guest did deign
 To note or spare his secret pain,
 But still, in stern and stubborn sort,
 Return'd him answer dark and short,
 Or started from the theme, to range
 In loose digression wild and strange,
 And forced the embarrass'd host to buy,
 By query close, direct reply.

XI.

A while he glozed upon the cause
 Of Commons, Covenant, and Laws,
 And Church Reform'd—but felt rebuke
 Beneath grim Bertram's sneering look,
 Then stammer'd—"Has a field been fought?
 Has Bertram news of battle brought?
 For sure a soldier, famed so far
 In foreign fields for feats of war,
 On eve of fight ne'er left the host,
 Until the field were won and lost."
 "Here, in your towers by circling Tees,
 You, Oswald Wycliffe, rest at ease;
 Why deem it strange that others come
 To share such safe and easy home,
 From fields where danger, death, and toil,
 Are the reward of civil broil?"—
 "Nay, mock not, friend! since well we know
 The near advances of the foe,
 To mar our northern army's work,
 Encamp'd before beleaguer'd York;
 Thy horse with valiant Fairfax lay,
 And must have fought—how went the day?"—

XII.

"Wouldst hear the tale?—On Marston heath⁴
 Met, front to front, the ranks of death;
 Flourish'd the trumpets fierce, and now
 Fired was each eye, and flush'd each brow;
 On either side loud clamours ring,
 'God and the Cause!'—'God and the King!
 Right English all, they rush'd to blows,
 With nought to win, and all to lose.
 I could have laugh'd—but lack'd the time—
 To see, in phrenesy sublime,

How the fierce zealots fought and bled,
 For king or state, as humour led ;
 Some for a dream of public good,
 Some for church-tippet, gown and hood,
 Draining their veins, in death to claim
 A patriot's or a martyr's name.—
 Led Bertram Risingham the hearts,
 That counter'd there on adverse parts,
 No superstitious fool had I
 Sought El Dorados in the sky !
 Chili had heard me through her states,
 And Lima oped her silver gates,
 Rich Mexico I had march'd through,
 And sack'd the splendours of Peru,
 Till sunk Pizarro's daring name,
 And, Cortez, thine, in Bertram's fame."
 "Still from the purpose wilt thou stray !
 Good gentle friend, how went the day ?

XIII.

"Good am I deem'd at trumpet-sound,
 And good where goblets dance the round.
 Though gentle ne'er was join'd, till now,
 With rugged Bertram's breast and brow.
 But I resume. The battle's rage
 Was like the strife which currents wage,
 Where Orinoco, in his pride,
 Rolls to the main no tribute tide,
 But 'gainst broad ocean urges far
 A rival sea of roaring war ;
 While, in ten thousand eddies driven,
 The billows fling their foam to heaven,
 And the pale pilot seeks in vain,
 Where rolls the river, where the main.
 Even thus upon the bloody field,
 The eddying tides of conflict wheel'd
 Ambiguous, till that heart of flame,
 Hot Rupert, on our squadrons came,
 Hurling against our spears a line
 Of gallants, fiery as their wine ;
 Then ours, though stubborn in their zeal,
 In zeal's despite began to reel.
 What wouldst thou more?—in tumult tost,
 Our leaders fell, our ranks were lost.
 A thousand men who drew the sword
 For both the Houses and the Word,
 Preach'd forth from hamlet, grange, and down.
 To curb the crosier and the crown,
 Now, stark and stiff, lie stretch'd in gore,
 And ne'er shall rail at mitre more.—
 Thus fared it, when I left the fight,
 With the good Cause and Commons' right."—

XIV.

Disastrous news !" dark Wycliffe said ;
 Assumed despondence bent his head.

While troubled joy was in his eye,
 The well-feign'd sorrow to belie —
 "Disastrous news!—when needed most,
 Told ye not that your chiefs were lost?
 Complete the woful tale, and say
 Who fell upon that fatal day;
 What leaders of repute and name
 Bought by their death a deathless fame.
 If such my direst foeman's doom,
 My tears shall dew his honour'd tomb.—
 No answer?—Friend, of all our host,
 Thou know'st whom I should hate the most,
 Whom thou too, once, wert wont to hate,
 Yet leavest me doubtful of his fate."—
 With look unmoved,—“Of friend or foe,
 Aught,” answer'd Bertram, “wouldst thou know,
 Demand in simple terms and plain,
 A soldier's answer shalt thou gain;—
 For question dark, or riddle high,
 I have not judgment nor reply.”

XV.

The wrath his art and fear suppress'd,
 Now blazed at once in Wycliffe's breast;
 And brave, from man so meanly born,
 Roused his hereditary scorn.
 “Wretch! hast thou paid thy bloody debt?
 PHILIP OF MORTHAM, lives he yet?
 False to thy patron or thine oath,
 Trait'rous or perjured, one or both,
 Slave! hast thou kept thy promise plight,
 To slay thy leader in the fight?”
 Then from his seat the soldier sprung,
 And Wycliffe's hand he strongly wrung;
 His grasp, as hard as glove of mail,
 Forced the red blood-drop from the nail—
 “A health!” he cried; and, ere he quaff'd,
 Flung from him Wycliffe's hand, and laugh'd
 —“Now, Oswald Wycliffe, speaks thy heart!
 Now play'st thou well thy genuine part!
 Worthy, but for thy craven fear,
 Like me to roam a bucanier.
 What reck'st thou of the Cause divine,
 If Mortham's wealth and lands be thine?
 What carest thou for beleaguer'd York,
 If this good hand have done its work?
 Or what though Fairfax and his best
 Are reddening Marston's swarthy breast,
 If Philip Mortham with them lie,
 Lending his life-blood to the dye?—
 Sit, then! and as mid comrades free
 Carousing after victory,
 When tales are told of blood and fear,
 That boys and women shrink to hear,
 From point to point I frankly tell
 The deed of death as it befell.

XVI.

"When purposed vengeance I forego,
Term me a wretch, nor deem me foe;
And when an insult I forgive,
Then brand me as a slave, and live!—
Philip of Mortham is with those
Whom Bertram Risingham calls foes;
Or whom more sure revenge attends,
If number'd with ungrateful friends.
As was his wont, ere battle glow'd,
Along the marshall'd ranks he rode,
And wore his visor up the while.
I saw his melancholy smile,
When, full opposed in front, he knew
Where Rokeby's kindred banner flew.
'And thus,' he said, 'will friends divide!'—
I heard, and thought how, side by side,
We two had turn'd the battle's tide,
In many a well-debated field,
Where Bertram's breast was Philip's shield.
I thought on Darien's deserts pale,
Where death bestrides the evening gale;
How o'er my friend my cloak I threw,
And fenceless faced the deadly dew;
I thought on Quariana's cliff,
Where, rescued from our foundering skiff,
Through the white breakers' wrath I bore
Exhausted Mortham to the shore;
And when his side an arrow found,
I suck'd the Indian's venom'd wound.
These thoughts like torrents rush'd along,
To sweep away my purpose strong.

XVII.

"Hearts are not flint, and flints are rent;
Hearts are not steel, and steel is bent.
When Mortham bade me, as of yore,
Be near him in the battle's roar,
I scarcely saw the spears laid low,
I scarcely heard the trumpets blow;
Lost was the war in inward strife,
Debating Mortham's death or life.
'Twas then I thought, how, lured to come,
As partner of his wealth and home,
Years of piratic wandering o'er,
With him I sought our native shore.
But Mortham's lord grew far estranged
From the bold heart with whom he ranged;
Doubts, horrors, superstitious fears,
Sadden'd and dimm'd descending years;
The wily priests their victim sought,
And damn'd each free-born deed and thought.
Then must I seek another home,
My license shook his sober dome;

If gold he gave, in one wild day
 I revell'd thrice the sum away.
 An idle outcast then I stray'd,
 Unfit for tillage or for trade;
 Deem'd, like the steel of rusted lance,
 Useless and dangerous at once.
 The women fear'd my hardy look,
 At my approach the peaceful shook;
 The merchant saw my glance of flame,
 And lock'd his hoards when Bertram came;
 Each child of coward peace kept far
 From the neglected son of war.

XVIII.

"But civil discord gave the call,
 And made my trade the trade of all.
 By Mortham urged, I came again
 His vassals to the fight to train.
 What guerdon waited on my care?
 I could not cant of creed or prayer;
 Sour fanatics each trust obtain'd,
 And I, dishonour'd and disdain'd,
 Gain'd but the high and happy lot,
 In these poor arms to front the shot!—
 All this thou know'st, thy gestures tell;
 Yet hear it o'er, and mark it well.
 'Tis honour bids me now relate
 Each circumstance of Mortham's fate.

XIX.

"Thoughts, from the tongue that slowly part,
 Glance quick as lightning through the heart.
 As my spur press'd my courser's side,
 Philip of Mortham's cause was tried,
 And, ere the charging squadrons mix'd,
 His plea was cast, his doom was fix'd.
 I watch'd him through the doubtful fray,
 That chang'd as March's moody day,
 Till, like a stream that bursts its bank,
 Fierce Rupert thunder'd on our flank.
 'T was then, midst tumult, smoke, and strife,
 Where each man fought for death or life,
 'T was then I fired my petronel,
 And Mortham, steed and rider, fell.
 One dying look he upward cast,
 Of wrath and anguish—'t was his last.
 Think not that there I stopp'd, to view
 What of the battle should ensue;
 But ere I clear'd that bloody press,
 Our northern horse ran masterless;
 Monekton and Mitton told the news,
 How troops of roundheads choked the Ouse,
 And many a bonny Scot, aghast,
 Spurring his palfrey northward, past,

Cursing the day when zeal or meed
 First lured their Lesley o'er the Tweed.
 Yet when I reach'd the banks of Swale,
 Had rumour learn'd another tale;
 With his barb'd horse, fresh tidings say,
 Stout Cromwell has redeem'd the day:⁶
 But whether false the news, or true,
 Oswald, I reck as light as you."

XX.

Not then by Wycliffe might be shown.
 How his pride startled at the tone
 In which his complice, fierce and free,
 Asserted guilt's equality.
 In smoothest terms his speech he wove,
 Of endless friendship, faith, and love;
 Promised and vow'd in courteous sort,
 But Bertram broke professions short.
 "Wycliffe, be sure not here I stay,
 No, scarcely till the rising day;
 Warn'd by the legends of my youth,
 I trust not an associate's truth.
 Do not my native dales prolong
 Of Percy Rede the tragic song,
 Train'd forward to his bloody fall,
 By Girsonfield, that treacherous Hall?⁷
 Oft, by the Pringle's haunted side,
 The shepherd sees his spectre glide.
 And near the spot that gave me name,
 The moated mound of Risingham,
 Where Reed upon her margin sees
 Sweet Woodburne's cottages and trees,
 Some ancient sculptor's art has shown
 An outlaw's image on the stone;⁸
 Unmatch'd in strength, a giant he,
 With quiver'd back, and kirtled knee.
 Ask how he died, that hunter bold,
 The tameless monarch of the wold,
 And age and infancy can tell,
 By brother's treachery he fell.
 Thus warn'd by legends of my youth,
 I trust to no associate's truth.

XXI.

"When last we reason'd of this deed,
 Nought, I bethink me, was agreed,
 Or by what rule, or when, or where,
 The wealth of Mortham we should share;
 Then list, while I the portion name,
 Our differing laws give each to claim.
 Thou, vassal sworn to England's throne,
 Her rules of heritage must own;
 They deal thee, as to nearest heir,
 Thy kinsman's lands and livings fair,

And these I yield:—do thou revere
 The statutes of the Bucanier.⁹
 Friend to the sea, and foeman sworn
 To all that on her waves are borne,
 When falls a mate in battle broil,
 His comrade heirs his portion'd spoil;
 When dies in fight a daring foe,
 He claims his wealth who struck the blow;
 And either rule to me assigns
 Those spoils of Indian seas and mines,
 Hoarded in Mortham's caverns dark;
 Ingot of gold and diamond spark,
 Chalice and plate from churches borne,
 And gems from shrieking beauty torn,
 Each string of pearl, each silver bar,
 And all the wealth of western war.
 I go to search, where, dark and deep,
 Those Trans-atlantic treasures sleep.
 Thou must along—for, lacking thee,
 The heir will scarce find entrance free;
 And then farewell. I haste to try
 Each varied pleasure wealth can buy;
 When cloy'd each wish, these wars afford
 Fresh work for Bertram's restless sword."

XXII.

An undecided answer hung
 On Oswald's hesitating tongue.
 Despite his craft, he heard with awe
 This ruffian stabber fix the law;
 While his own troubled passions veer
 Through hatred, joy, regret, and fear:—
 Joy'd at the soul that Bertram flies,
 He grudged the murderer's mighty prize,
 Hated his pride's presumptuous tone,
 And fear'd to wend with him alone.
 At length, that middle course to steer,
 To cowardice and craft so dear,
 "His charge," he said, "would ill allow
 His absence from the fortress now;
 WILFRID on Bertram should attend,
 His son should journey with his friend."

XXIII.

Contempt kept Bertram's anger down,
 And wreathed to savage smile his frown.
 "Wilfrid, or thou—'t is one to me,
 Whichever bears the golden key.
 Yet think not but I mark, and smile
 To mark, thy poor and selfish wile!
 If injury from me you fear,
 What, Oswald Wycliffe, shields thee here?
 I've sprung from walls more high than these,
 I've swam through deeper streams than Tees."

Might I not stab thee ere one yell
Could rouse the distant sentinel?
Start not—it is not my design,
But, if it were, weak fence were thine;
And, trust me, that, in time of need,
This hand hath done more desperate deed.
Go, haste and rouse thy slumbering son;
Time calls, and I must needs be gone."

XXIV.

Nought of his sire's ungenerous part
Polluted Wilfrid's gentle heart;
A heart too soft from early life
To hold with fortune needful strife.
His sire, while yet a hardier race
Of numerous sons were Wycliffe's grace,
On Wilfrid set contemptuous brand,
For feeble heart and forceless hand;
But a fond mother's care and joy
Were centred in her sickly boy.
No touch of childhood's frolic mood
Show'd the elastic spring of blood;
Hour after hour he loved to pore
On Shakspeare's rich and varied lore,
But turn'd from martial scenes and light,
From Falstaff's feast and Percy's fight,
To ponder Jacques' moral strain,
And muse with Hamlet, wise in vain;
And weep himself to soft repose
O'er gentle Desdemona's woes.

XXV.

In youth he sought not pleasures found
By youth in horse, and hawk, and hound,
But loved the quiet joys that wake
By lonely stream and silent lake;
In Deepdale's solitude to lie,
Where all is cliff and copse and sky;
To climb Catcastle's dizzy peak,
Or lone Pendragon's mound to seek.
Such was his wont; and there his dream
Soar'd on some wild fantastic theme,
Of faithful love, or ceaseless spring,
Till Contemplation's wearied wing
The enthusiast could no more sustain,
And sad he sunk to earth again.

XXVI.

He loved—as many a lay can tell,
Preserved in Stanmore's lonely dell;
For his was minstrel's skill, he caught
The art unteachable, untaught;
He loved—his soul did nature frame
For love, and fancy nursed the flame

Vainly he loved—for seldom swain
Of such soft mould is loved again;
Silent he loved—in every gaze
Was passion, friendship in his phrase.
So mused his life away—till died
His brethren all, their father's pride.
Wilfrid is now the only heir
Of all his stratagems and care,
And destined, darkling, to pursue
Ambition's maze by Oswald's clue.

XXVII.

Wilfrid must love and woo the bright
Matilda, heir of Rokeby's knight.
To love her was an easy hest,
The secret empress of his breast;
To woo her was a harder task
To one that durst not hope or ask.
Yet all Matilda could, she gave
In pity to her gentle slave;
Friendship, esteem, and fair regard,
And praise, the poet's best reward!
She read the tales his taste approved,
And sung the lays he framed or loved;
Yet, loath to nurse the fatal flame
Of hopeless love in friendship's name,
In kind caprice she oft withdrew
The favouring glance to friendship due,
Then grieved to see her victim's pain,
And gave the dangerous smiles again.

XXVIII.

So did the suit of Wilfrid stand,
When war's loud summons waked the land.
Three banners, floating o'er the Tees,
The wo-foreboding peasant sees;
In concert oft they braved of old
The bordering Scot's incursion bold;
Frowning defiance in their pride,
Their vassals now and lords divide.
From his fair hall on Greta banks,
The Knight of Rokeby led his ranks,
To aid the valiant northern Earls,
Who drew the sword for royal Charles.
Mortham, by marriage near allied,—
His sister had been Rokeby's bride,
Though long before the civil fray,
In peaceful grave the lady lay,—
Philip of Mortham raised his band,
And march'd at Fairfax's command;
While Wycliffe, bound by many a train
Of kindred art with wily Vane,
Less prompt to brave the bloody field,
Made Barnard's battlements his shield,

Secured them with his Lunedale powers
And for the Commons held the towers.

XXIX.

The lovely heir of Rokeby's Knight
Waits in his halls the event of fight;
For England's war rever'd the claim
Of every unprotected name,
And spared, amid its fiercest rage,
Childhood and womanhood and age.
But Wilfrid, son to Rokeby's foe,
Must the dear privilege forego,
By Greta's side, in evening grey,
To steal upon Matilda's way,
Striving, with fond hypocrisy,
For careless step and vacant eye;
Calming each anxious look and glance,
To give the meeting all to chance,
Or framing, as a fair excuse,
The book, the pencil, or the muse;
Something to give, to sing, to say,
Some modern tale, some ancient lay.
Then, while the long'd-for minutes last,—
Ah! minutes quickly over-past!—
Recording each expression free,
Of kind or careless courtesy,
Each friendly look, each softer tone,
As food for fancy when alone.
All this is o'er—but still, unseen,
Wilfrid may lurk in Eastwood green,
To watch Matilda's wonted round,
While springs his heart at every sound.
She comes!—'tis but a passing sight,
Yet serves to cheat his weary night;
She comes not—He will wait the hour,
When her lamp lightens in the tower;
'Tis something yet, if, as she past,
Her shade is o'er the lattice cast.
"What is my life, my hope?" he said;
"Alas! a transitory shade!"

XXX.

Thus wore his life, though reason strove
For mastery in vain with love,
Forcing upon his thoughts the sum
Of present woe and ills to come,
While still he turned impatient ear
From Truth's intrusive voice severe.
Gentle, indifferent, and subdued,
In all but this, unmoved he view'd
Each outward change of ill and good:
But Wilfrid, docile, soft, and mild,
Was Fancy's spoil'd and wayward child;
In her bright car she bade him ride,
With one fair form to grace his side,

Or, in some wild and lone retreat,
 Flung her high spells around his seat,
 Bathed in her dews his languid head,
 Her fairy mantle o'er him spread,
 For him her opiates gave to flow,
 Which he who tastes, can ne'er forego,
 And placed him in her circle, free
 From every stern reality,
 Till, to the Visionary, seem
 Her day-dreams truth, and truth a dream.

XXXI.

Woe to the youth whom Fancy gains,
 Winning from Reason's hand the reins,
 Pity and woe! for such a mind
 Is soft, contemplative, and kind;
 And woe to those who train such youth,
 And spare to press the rights of truth,
 The mind to strengthen and anneal,
 While on the stithy glows the steel!
 O teach him, while your lessons last,
 To judge the present by the past;
 Remind him of each wish pursued,
 How rich it glow'd with promised good;
 Remind him of each wish enjoy'd,
 How soon his hopes possession cloy'd!
 Tell him, we play unequal game,
 Whene'er we shoot by Fancy's aim!
 And, ere he strip him for her race,
 Show the conditions of the chase:
 Two sisters by the goal are set,
 Cold Disappointment and Regret;
 One disenchant the winner's eyes,
 And strips of all its worth the prize;
 While one augments its gaudy show,
 More to enhance the loser's woe.
 The victor sees his fairy gold,
 Transformed, when won, to drossy mold;
 But still the vanquish'd mourns his loss,
 And rues, as gold, that glittering dross.

XXXII.

More would'st thou know—yon tower survey,
 Yon couch unpress'd since parting day,
 Yon untrimm'd lamp, whose yellow gleam
 Is mingling with the cold moonbeam,
 And yon thin form!—the hectic red
 On his pale cheek unequal spread;
 The head reclined, the loosen'd hair,
 The limbs relax'd, the mournful air.—
 See, he looks up;—a woful smile
 Lightens his wo-worn cheek a while,—
 'Tis fancy wakes some idle thought,
 To gild the ruin she has wrought;

For, like the bat of Indian brakes,
 Her pinions fan the wound she makes,
 And soothing thus the dreamer's pain,
 She drinks his life-blood from the vein.
 Now to the lattice turn his eyes,
 Vain hope! to see the sun arise.
 The moon with clouds is still o'ercast,
 Still howls by fits the stormy blast;
 Another hour must wear away,
 Ere the East kindle into day,
 And hark! to waste that weary hour,
 He tries the minstrel's magic power.

XXXIII.

Song.

TO THE MOON.

Hail to thy cold and clouded beam,
 Pale pilgrim of the troubled sky!
 Hail, though the mists that o'er thee stream
 Lend to thy brow their sullen dye!
 How should thy pure and peaceful eye
 Untroubled view our scenes below,
 Or how a tearless beam supply
 To light a world of war and wo!

Fair Queen! I will not blame thee now,
 As once by Greta's fairy side;
 Each little cloud that dimm'd thy brow
 Did then an angel's beauty hide.
 And of the shades I then could chide,
 Still are the thoughts to memory dear,
 For, while a softer strain I tried,
 They hid my blush, and calm'd my fear.

Then did I swear thy ray serene
 Was form'd to light some lonely dell,
 By two fond lovers only seen,
 Reflected from the crystal well,
 Or sleeping on their mossy cell,
 Or quivering on the lattice bright,
 Or glancing on their couch, to tell
 How swiftly wanes the summer night!

XXXIV.

He starts—a step at this lone hour!
 A voice!—his father seeks the tower,
 With haggard look and troubled sense,
 Fresh from his dreadful conference.
 “Wilfrid!—what, not to sleep address’d?
 Thou hast no cares to chase thy rest.
 Mortham has fall’n on Marston-moor;
 Bertram brings warrant to secure
 His treasures, bought by spoil and blood,
 For the state’s use and public good.

The menials will thy voice obey;
Let his commission have its way,
In every point, in every word."—
Then, in a whisper,—“Take thy sword;
Bertram is—what I must not tell.
I hear his hasty step—farewell!”

CANTO SECOND.

I.

FAR in the chambers of the west,
The gale had sigh'd itself to rest;
The moon was cloudless now and clear,
But pale, and soon to disappear.
The thin grey clouds wax dimly light
On Brusleton and Houghton height,
And the rich dale, that eastward lay,
Waited the wakening touch of day,
To give its woods and cultured plain,
And towers and spires, to light again.
But, westward, Stanmore's shapeless swell,
And Lunedale wild, and Kelton-fell,
And rock-begirdled Gilmanscar,
And Arkingarth, lay dark afar;
While, as a livelier twilight falls,
Emerge proud Barnard's banner'd walls.
High crown'd he sits, in dawning pale,
The sovereign of the lovely vale.

II.

What prospects, from his watch-tower high,
Gleam gradual on the warder's eye!—
Far sweeping to the east, he sees
Down his deep woods the course of Tees,¹⁰
And tracks his wanderings by the steam
Of summer vapours from the stream;
And ere he paced his destined hour
By Brackenbury's dungeon-tower,
These silver mists shall melt away,
And dew the woods with glittering spray.
Then in broad lustre shall be shown
That mighty trench of living stone,
And each huge trunk that, from the side,
Reclines him o'er the darksome tide,
Where Tees, full many a fathom low,
Wears with his rage no common foe;
For pebbly bank, nor sand-bed here,
Nor clay-mound, checks his fierce career,
Condemn'd to mine a channell'd way,
O'er solid sheets of marble grey.

III.

Nor Tees alone, in dawning bright,
 Shall rush upon the ravish'd sight;
 But many a tributary stream
 Each from its own dark dell shall gleam:
 Staindrop, who, from her silvan bowers,
 Salutes proud Raby's battled towers;
 The rural brook of Egliston,
 And Balder, named from Odin's son
 And Greta, to whose banks ere long
 We lead the lovers of the song;
 And silver Lune, from Stanmore wild,
 And fairy Thorsgill's murmuring child;
 And last and least, but loveliest still,
 Romantic Deepdale's slender rill.
 Who in that dim-wood glen hath stray'd,
 Yet long'd for Roslin's magic glade?
 Who, wandering there, hath sought to change,
 Even for that vale so stern and strange,
 Where Cartland's Crag, fantastic rent,
 Through her green copse like spires are sent?
 Yet, Albin, yet the praise be thine,
 Thy scenes and story to combine!
 Thou bid'st him, who by Roslin strays,
 List to the deeds of other days;
 'Mid Cartland's Crag thou show'st the cave,
 The refuge of thy champion brave;^a
 Giving each rock its storied tale,
 Pouring a lay for every dale,
 Knitting, as with a moral band,
 Thy native legends with thy land,
 To lend each scene the interest high
 Which genius beams from Beauty's eye.

IV.

Bertram awaited not the sight
 Which sun-rise shows from Barnard's height.
 But from the towers, preventing day,
 With Wilfrid took his early way,
 While misty dawn, and moonbeam pale,
 Still mingled in the silent dale.
 By Barnard's bridge of stately stone,
 The southern bank of Tees they won;
 Their winding path then eastward cast,
 And Egliston's grey ruins pass'd;¹¹
 Each on his own deep visions bent,
 Silent and sad they onward went.
 Well may you think that Bertram's mood,
 To Wilfrid savage seem'd and rude;
 Well may you think bold Risingham
 Held Wilfrid trivial, poor, and tame;
 And small the intercourse, I ween,
 Such uncongenial souls between.

^a Cartland Crag, near Lanark, celebrated as among the favourite retreats of Sir William Wallace.

V.

Stern Bertram shunn'd the nearer way,
Through Rokeby's park and chase that lay,
And, skirting high the valley's ridge,
They cross'd by Greta's ancient bridge.
Descending where her waters wind
Free for a space and unconfined,
As, 'scaped from Brignall's dark-wood glen,
She seeks wild Mortham's deeper den.
There, as his eye glanced o'er the mound,
Raised by that Legion¹² long renown'd,
Whose votive shrine asserts their claim,
Of pious, faithful, conquering fame,
"Stern sons of war!" sad Wilfrid sigh'd,
"Behold the boast of Roman pride!
What now of all your toils are known?
A grassy trench, a broken stone!"—
This to himself; for moral strain
To Bertram were address'd in vain.

VI.

Of different mood, a deeper sigh
Awoke, when Rokeby's turrets high¹³
Were northward in the dawning seen
To rear them o'er the thicket green.
O then, though Spenser's self had stray'd
Beside him through the lovely glade,
Lending his rich luxuriant glow
Of fancy, all its charms to show,
Pointing the stream rejoicing free,
As captive set at liberty,
Flashing her sparkling waves abroad,
And clamouring joyful on her road;
Pointing where, up the sunny banks,
The trees retire in scatter'd ranks,
Save where, advanced before the rest,
On knoll or hillock rears his crest,
Lonely and huge, the giant Oak,
As champions, when their band is broke,
Stand forth to guard the rearward post,
The bulwark of the scatter'd host—
All this, and more, might Spenser say,
Yet waste in vain his magic lay,
While Wilfrid eyed the distant tower,
Whose lattice lights Matilda's bower.

VII.

The open vale is soon pass'd o'er,
Rokeby, though nigh, is seen no more
Sinking mid Greta's thickets deep,
A wild and darker course they keep,
A stern and lone, yet lovely road,
As e'er the foot of Minstrel trode!¹⁴
Broad shadows o'er their passage fell,
Deeper and narrower grew the dell:

It seem'd some mountain, rent and riven,
A channel for the stream had given,
So high the cliffs of limestone grey
Hung beetling o'er the torrent's way
Yielding, along their rugged base,
A flinty footpath's niggard space,
Where he, who winds 'twixt rock and wave,
May hear the headlong torrent rave,
And like a steed in frantic fit,
That flings the froth from curb and bit,
May view her chafe her waves to spray,
O'er every rock that bars her way,
Till foam-globes on her eddies ride,
Thick as the schemes of human pride
That down life's current drive amain,
As frail, as frothy, and as vain !

VIII.

The cliffs that rear their haughty head
High o'er the river's darksome bed,
Were now all naked, wild, and grey,
Now waving all with greenwood spray ;
Here trees to every crevice clung,
And o'er the dell their branches hung ;
And there, all splinter'd and uneven,
The shiver'd rocks ascend to heaven ;
Oft, too, the ivy swathed their breast,
And wreathed its garland round their crest,
Or from the spires bade loosely flare
Its tendrils in the middle air.
As pennons wont to wave of old
O'er the high feast of Baron bold,
When revell'd loud the feudal rout,
And the arch'd halls return'd their shout ;
Such and more wild is Greta's roar,
And such the echoes from her shore.
And so the ivied banners gleam,
Waved wildly o'er the brawling stream.

IX.

Now from the stream the rocks recede.
But leave between no sunny mead,
No, nor the spot of pebbly sand,
Oft found by such a mountain strand ;
Forming such warm and dry retreat,
As fancy deems the lonely seat,
Where hermit, wandering from his cell,
His rosary might love to tell.
But here, 'twixt rock and river, grew
A dismal grove of sable yew,
With whose sad tints were mingled seen
The blighted fir's sepulchral green.
Seem'd that the trees their shadows cast,
The earth that nourish'd them to blast ;

For never knew that swarthy grove
The verdant hue that fairies love;
Nor wilding green, nor woodland flower,
Arose within its baleful bower:
The dank and sable earth receives
Its only carpet from the leaves,
That, from the withering branches cast,
Bestrew'd the ground with every blast.
Though now the sun was o'er the hill,
In this dark spot 'twas twilight still,
Save that on Greta's farther side
Some straggling beams through copsewood glide;
And wild and savage contrast made
That dingle's deep and funeral shade,
With the bright tints of early day,
Which, glimmering through the ivy spray,
On the opposing summit lay.

X.

The lated peasant shunn'd the dell;
For Superstition wont to tell
Of many a grisly sound and sight,
Scaring his path at dead of night.
When Christmas logs blaze high and wide,
Such wonders speed the festal tide;
While Curiosity and Fear,
Pleasure and Pain, sit crouching near,
Till childhood's cheek no longer glows,
And village maidens lose the rose.
The thrilling interest rises higher,
The circle closes nigh and nigher,
And shuddering glance is cast behind,
As louder moans the wintry wind.
Believe, that fitting scene was laid
For such wild tales in Mortham glade;
For who had seen, on Greta's side,
By that dim light fierce Bertram stride.
In such a spot, at such an hour,—
If touch'd by Superstition's power,
Might well have deem'd that Hell had given
A murderer's ghost to upper heaven,
While Wilfrid's form had seem'd to glide
Like his pale victim by his side.

XI.

Nor think to village swains alone
Are these unearthly terrors known;
For not to rank nor sex confined
Is this vain ague of the mind:
Hearts firm as steel, as marble hard,
'Gainst faith, and love, and pity barr'd,
Have quaked, like aspen leaves in May,
Beneath its universal sway.
Bertram had listed many a tale
Of wonder in his native dale,

That in his secret soul retain'd
 The credence they in childhood gain'd:
 Nor less his wild adventurous youth
 Believed in every legend's truth;
 Learn'd when, beneath the tropic gale,
 Full swell'd the vessel's steady sail,
 And the broad Indian moon her light
 Pour'd on the watch of middle night,
 When seamen love to hear and tell
 Of portent, prodigy, and spell:
 What gales are sold on Lapland's shore,
 How whistle rash bids tempests roar,
 Of witch, of mermaid, and of sprite,
 Of Erick's cap and Elmo's light;¹⁵
 Or of that Phantom Ship, whose form
 Shoots like a meteor through the storm;
 When the dark scud comes driving hard,
 And lower'd is every top-sail yard,
 And canvass wove in earthly looms,
 No more to brave the storm presumes!
 Then, 'mid the war of sea and sky,
 Top and top-gallant hoisted high,
 Full spread and crowded every sail,
 The Demon Frigate braves the gale;¹⁶
 And well the doom'd spectators know
 The harbinger of wreck and woe.

XII.

Then, too, were told, in stifled tone,
 Marvels and omens all their own;
 How, by some desert isle or key,¹⁷
 Where Spaniards wrought their cruelty,
 Or where the savage pirate's mood
 Repaid it home in deeds of blood,
 Strange nightly sounds of woe and fear
 Appall'd the listening Bucanier,
 Whose light-armed shallop anchored lay
 In ambush by the lonely bay.
 The groan of grief, the shriek of pain,
 Ring from the moonlight groves of cane;
 The fierce adventurer's heart they scare,
 Who wearies memory for a prayer,
 Curses the road-stead, and with gale
 Of early morning lifts the sail,
 To give, in thirst of blood and prey,
 A legend for another bay.

XIII.

Thus, as a man, a youth, a child,
 Train'd in the mystic and the wild,
 With this on Bertram's soul at times
 Rush'd a dark feeling of his crimes;
 Such to his troubled soul their form,
 As the pale Death-ship to the storm,

And such their omen dim and dread,
As shrieks and voices of the dead,—
That pang, whose transitory force
Hover'd 'twixt horror and remorse—
That pang, perchance, his bosom press'd,
As Wilfrid sudden he address'd :—
“ Wilfrid, this glen is never trode
Until the sun rides high abroad ;
Yet twice have I beheld to-day
A Form, that seem'd to dog our way ;
Twice from my glance it seem'd to flee,
And shroud itself by cliff or tree.
How think'st thou ?—Is our path way-laid ?
Or hath thy sire my trust betray'd ?
If so”——Ere, starting from his dream,
That turn'd upon a gentler theme,
Wilfrid had roused him to reply,
Bertram sprung forward, shouting high,
“ Whate'er thou art, thou now shalt stand ! ”—
And forth he darted, sword in hand.

XIV.

As bursts the levin in its wrath,
He shot him down the sounding path ;
Rock, wood, and stream, rang wildly out,
To his loud step and savage shout.
Seems that the object of his race
Hath scal'd the cliffs ; his frantic chase
Sidelong he turns, and now 'tis bent
Right up the rock's tall battlement ;
Straining each sinew to ascend,
Foot, hand, and knee, their aid must lend.
Wilfrid, all dizzy with dismay,
Views, from beneath, his dreadful way :
Now to the oak's warp'd roots he clings,
Now trusts his weight to ivy strings ;
Now, like the wild-goat, must he dare
An unsupported leap in air ;
Hid in the shrubby rain-course now,
You mark him by the crashing bough,
And by his corslet's sullen clank,
And by the stones spurn'd from the bank,
And by the hawk scared from her nest,
And raven's croaking o'er their guest,
Who deem his forfeit limbs shall pay
The tribute of his bold essay.

XV.

See, he emerges !—desperate now
All farther course—Yon beetling brow,
In craggy nakedness sublime,
What heart or foot shall dare to climb ?
It bears no tendril for his clasp,
Presents no angle to his grasp :

Sole stay his foot may rest upon,
 Is yon earth-bedded jetting stone.
 Balanced on such precarious prop,
 He strains his grasp to reach the top.
 Just as the dangerous stretch he makes,
 By heaven, his faithless footstool shakes !
 Beneath his tottering bulk it bends,
 It sways, . . . it loosens, . . . it descends
 And downward holds its headlong way,
 Crashing o'er rock and copsewood spray.
 Loud thunders shake the echoing dell !—
 Fell it alone?—alone it fell.
 Just on the very verge of fate,
 The hardy Bertram's falling weight
 He trusted to his sinewy hands,
 And on the top unharm'd he stands !

XVI.

Wilfrid a safer path pursued ;
 At intervals where, roughly hew'd,
 Rude steps ascending from the dell
 Render'd the cliffs accessible.
 By circuit slow he thus attain'd
 The height that Risingham had gain'd,
 And when he issued from the wood,
 Before the gate of Mortham stood,¹⁸
 'T was a fair scene ! the sunbeam lay
 On battled tower and portal grey :
 And from the grassy slope he sees
 The Greta flow to meet the Tees ;
 Where, issuing from her darksome bed,
 She caught the morning's eastern red,
 And through the softening vale below
 Roll'd her bright waves, in rosy glow,
 All blushing to her bridal bed,
 Like some shy maid in convent bred :
 While linnet, lark, and blackbird gay,
 Sing forth her nuptial roundelay.

XVII.

'T was sweetly sung that roundelay ;
 That summer morn shone blithe and gay ;
 But morning beam, and wild-bird's call,
 Awaked not Mortham's silent hall.
 No porter, by the low-brow'd gate,
 Took in the wonted niche his seat ;
 To the paved court no peasant drew ;
 Waked to their toil no menial crew ;
 The maiden's carol was not heard,
 As to her morning task she fared :
 In the void offices around,
 Rung not a hoof, nor bay'd a hound ;
 Nor eager steed, with shrilling neigh,
 Accused the lagging groom's delay ;

Untrimm'd, undress'd, neglected now,
 Was alley'd walk and orchard bough;
 All spoke the master's absent care,
 All spoke neglect and disrepair.
 South of the gate, an arrow flight,
 Two mighty elms their limbs unite,
 As if a canopy, to spread
 O'er the lone dwelling of the dead;
 For their huge bows in arches bent
 Above a massive monument,
 Carved o'er in ancient Gothic wise,
 With many a scutcheon and device:
 There, spent with toil and sunk in gloom,
 Bertram stood pondering by the tomb.

XVIII.

"It vanish'd like a fitting ghost!
 Behind this tomb," he said, "'twas lost—
 This tomb, where oft I deem'd lies stored
 Of Mortham's Indian wealth the hoard.
 'Tis true, the aged servants said
 Here his lamented wife is laid;
 But weightier reasons may be guess'd
 For their lord's strict and stern behest,
 That none should on his steps intrude,
 Whene'er he sought this solitude.—
 An ancient mariner I knew,
 What time I sail'd with Morgan's crew,
 Who oft, 'mid our carousals, spake
 Of Raleigh, Forbisher, and Drake;
 Adventurous hearts! who barter'd, bold,
 Their English steel for Spanish gold.
 Trust not, would his experience say,
 Captain or comrade with your prey;
 But seek some charnel, when, at full,
 The moon gilds skeleton and skull:
 There dig, and tomb your precious heap,
 And bid the dead your treasure keep;¹³
 Sure stewards they, if fitting spell
 Their service to the task compel.
 Lacks there such charnel?—kill a slave,
 Or prisoner, on the treasure-grave;
 And bid his discontented ghost
 Stalk nightly on his lonely post.—
 Such was his tale. Its truth, I ween,
 Is in my morning vision seen."

XIX.

Wilfrid, who scorn'd the legend wild,
 In mingled mirth and pity smiled,
 Much marvelling that a breast so bold
 In such fond tale belief should hold;
 But yet of Bertram sought to know
 The apparition's form and show.—

The power within the guilty breast,
 Oft vanquish'd, never quite suppress'd,
 That unsubdued and lurking lies
 To take the felon by surprise,
 And force him, as by magic spell,
 In his despite his guilt to tell,—²⁰
 That power in Bertram's breast awoke;
 Scarce conscious he was heard, he spoke;
 "T was Mortham's form, from foot to head!
 His morion, with the plume of red,
 His shape, his mien—'t was Mortham, right
 As when I slew him in the fight."—
 "Thou slay him?—thou?"—With conscious start
 He heard, then mann'd his haughty heart—
 "I slew him?—I!—I had forgot
 Thou, stripling, knew'st not of the plot.
 But it is spoken—nor will I
 Deed done, or spoken word, deny.
 I slew him; I! for thankless pride;
 'T was by this hand that Mortham died!"

XX.

Wilfrid, of gentle hand and heart,
 Averse to every active part,
 But most averse to martial broil,
 From danger shrunk, and turn'd from toil;
 Yet the meek lover of the lyre
 Nursed one brave spark of noble fire;—
 Against injustice, fraud, or wrong,
 His blood beat high, his hand wax'd strong.
 Not his the nerves that could sustain,
 Unshaken, danger, toil, and pain;
 But, when that spark blazed forth to flame,
 He rose superior to his frame.
 And now it came, that generous mood;
 And, in full current of his blood,
 On Bertram he laid desperate hand,
 Placed firm his foot, and drew his brand.
 "Should every fiend, to whom thou'rt sold,
 Rise in thine aid, I keep my hold.—
 Arouse there, ho! take spear and sword!
 Attach the murderer of your lord!"

XXI.

A moment, fix'd as by a spell,
 Stood Bertram—It seem'd miracle,
 That one so feeble, soft, and tame,
 Set grasp on warlike Risingham,
 But when he felt a feeble stroke,
 The fiend within the ruffian woke!
 To wrench the sword from Wilfrid's hand,
 To dash him headlong on the sand,
 Was but one moment's work,—one more
 Had drench'd the blade in Wilfrid's gore.

But, in the instant it arose,
 To end his life, his love, his woes,
 A warlike form, that mark'd the scene,
 Presents his rapier sheathed between,
 Parries the fast-descending blow,
 And steps 'twixt Wilfrid and his foe;
 Nor then unscabbarded his brand,
 But, sternly pointing with his hand,
 With monarch's voice forbade the fight,
 And motion'd Bertram from his sight.
 "Go, and repent,"—he said, "while time
 Is given thee; add not crime to crime."

XXII.

Mute, and uncertain, and amazed,
 As on a vision, Bertram gazed!
 'Twas Mortham's bearing, bold and high,
 His sinewy frame, his falcon eye,
 His look and accent of command,
 The martial gesture of his hand,
 His stately form, spare-built and tall,
 His war-bleach'd locks—'t was Mortham all.
 Through Bertram's dizzy brain career
 A thousand thoughts, and all of fear;
 His wavering faith received not quite
 The form he saw as Mortham's sprite,
 But more he fear'd it, if it stood
 His lord, in living flesh and blood.—
 What spectre can the charnel send,
 So dreadful as an injured friend?
 Then, too, the habit of command,
 Used by the leader of the band,
 When Risingham, for many a day,
 Had march'd and fought beneath his sway,
 Tamed him—and, with reverted face,
 Backwards he bore his sullen pace;
 Oft stopp'd, and oft on Mortham stared,
 And dark as rated mastiff glared;
 But when the tramp of steeds was heard,
 Plunged in the glen, and disappear'd;—
 Nor longer there the Warrior stood,
 Retiring eastward through the wood,
 But first to Wilfrid warning gives,
 "Tell thou to none that Mortham lives."

XXIII.

Still rung these words in Wilfrid's ear,
 Hinting he knew not what of fear;
 When nearer came the coursers' tread,
 And, with his father at their head,
 Of horsemen arm'd a gallant power
 Rein'd up their steeds before the tower.
 "Whence these pale looks, my son?" he said:
 "Where's Bertram?—Why that naked blade?"

Wilfrid ambiguously replied,
 (For Mortham's charge his honour tied,)
 "Bertram is gone—the villain's word
 Avouch'd him murderer of his lord!
 Even now we fought—but, when your tread
 Announced you nigh, the felon fled."
 In Wycliffe's conscious eye appear
 A guilty hope, a guilty fear;
 On his pale brow the dewdrop broke,
 And his lip quiver'd as he spoke:—

XXIV.

"A murderer!—Philip Mortham died
 Amid the battle's wildest tide.
 Wilfrid, or Bertram raves, or you!
 Yet, grant such strange confession true,
 Pursuit were vain—let him fly far—
 Justice must sleep in civil war."
 A gallant Youth rode near his side,
 Brave Rokeby's page, in battle tried;
 That morn, an embassy of weight
 He brought to Barnard's castle gate,
 And follow'd now in Wycliffe's train,
 An answer for his lord to gain.
 His steed, whose arch'd and sable neck
 An hundred wreaths of foam bedeck,
 Chafed not against the curb more high
 Than he at Oswald's cold reply;
 He bit his lip, implored his saint,
 (His the old faith)—then burst restraint:—

XXV.

"Yes! I beheld his bloody fall,
 By that base traitor's dastard ball,
 Just when I thought to measure sword,
 Presumptuous hope! with Mortham's lord.
 And shall the murderer 'scape, who slew
 His leader, generous, brave, and true?
 Escape, while on the dew you trace
 The marks of his gigantic pace?
 No! ere the sun that dew shall dry,
 False Risingham shall yield or die.—
 Ring out the castle 'larum bell!
 Arouse the peasants with the knell!
 Meantime disperse—ride, gallants, ride!
 Beset the wood on every side.
 But if among you one there be,
 That honours Mortham's memory,
 Let him dismount and follow me!
 Else on your crests sit fear and shame,
 And foul suspicion dog your name!"

XXVI.

Instant to earth young REDMOND sprung;
 Instant on earth the harness rung

Of twenty men of Wycliffe's band,
 Who waited not their lord's command.
 Redmond his spurs from buskins drew,
 His mantle from his shoulders threw,
 His pistols in his belt he placed,
 The green-wood gain'd, the footsteps traced,
 Shouted like huntsman to his hounds,
 "To cover, hark!"—and in he bounds.
 Scarce heard was Oswald's anxious cry,
 "Suspicion! yes—pursue him—fly—
 But venture not, in useless strife,
 On ruffian desperate of his life;
 Whoever finds him, shoot him dead!^a
 Five hundred nobles for his head!"

XXVII.

The horsemen gallop'd, to make good
 Each path that issued from the wood.
 Loud from the thickets rung the shout
 Of Redmond and his eager rout;
 With them was Wilfrid, stung with ire,
 And envying Redmond's martial fire,
 And emulous of fame.—But where
 Is Oswald, noble Mortham's heir?—
 He, bound by honour, law, and faith,
 Avenger of his kinsman's death?—
 Leaning against the elmin tree,
 With drooping head and slacken'd knee,
 And clenched teeth, and close-clasp'd hands,
 In agony of soul he stands!
 His downcast eye on earth is bent,
 His soul to every sound is lent;
 For in each shout that cleaves the air,
 May ring discovery and despair.

XXVIII.

What 'vail'd it him, that brightly play'd
 The morning sun on Mortham's glade?
 All seems in giddy round to ride,
 Like objects on a stormy tide,
 Seen eddying by the moonlight dim,
 Imperfectly to sink and swim.

^a MS.—*To the Printer*.—"On the disputed line, it may stand thus—

'Whoever finds him, strike him dead;'

Or,

'Who first shall find him, strike him dead.'

But I think the addition of *felon*, or any such word, will impair the strength of the passage. Oswald is too anxious to use epithets, and is hallooing after the men, by this time entering the wood. The simpler the line the better. In my humble opinion, *shoot him dead*, was much better than any other: it implies, *Do not even approach him; kill him at a distance*. I leave it, however, to you, only saying, that I never shun common words when they are to the purpose. As to your criticisms, I cannot but attend to them, because they touch passages with which I am myself discontented.—W.S."

What 'vail'd it, that the fair domain,
 Its battled mansion, hill, and plain,
 On which the sun so brightly shone,
 Envied so long, was now his own?
 The lowest dungeon, in that hour,
 Of Brackenbury's dismal tower,
 Had been his choice, could such a doom
 Have open'd Mortham's bloody tomb!
 Forced, too, to turn unwilling ear
 To each surmise of hope or fear,
 Murmur'd among the rustics round,
 Who gather'd at the 'larum sound;
 He dared not turn his head away,
 E'en to look up to heaven to pray,
 Or call on hell, in bitter mood,
 For one sharp death-shot from the wood!

XXIX.

At length, o'erpast that dreadful space,
 Back straggling came the scatter'd chase;
 Jaded and weary, horse and man,
 Return'd the troopers, one by one,
 Wilfrid, the last, arrived to say,
 All trace was lost of Bertram's way,
 Though Redmond still, up Brignall wood,
 The hopeless quest in vain pursued.—
 O, fatal doom of human race!
 What tyrant passions passions chase!
 Remorse from Oswald's brow is gone—
 Avarice and pride resume their throne;
 The pang of instant terror by,
 They dictate thus their slave's reply:—

XXX.

"Ay—let him range like hasty hound!
 And if the grim wolf's lair be found,
 Small is my care how goes the game
 With Redmond, or with Risingham.—
 Nay, answer not, thou simple boy!
 Thy fair Matilda, all so coy
 To thee, is of another mood
 To that bold youth of Erin's blood.
 Thy ditties will she freely praise,
 And pay thy pains with courtly phrase;
 In a rough path will oft command—
 Accept at least—thy friendly hand;
 His she avoids, or, urged and pray'd,
 Unwilling takes his proffer'd aid,
 While conscious passion plainly speaks
 In downcast look and blushing cheeks.
 Whene'er he sings, will she glide nigh,
 And all her soul is in her eye;
 Yet doubts she still to tender free
 The wonted words of courtesy.

These are strong signs!—yet wherefore sigh,
And wipe, effeminate, thine eye?
Thine shall she be, if thou attend
The counsels of thy sire and friend.

XXXI.

“Scarce wert thou gone, when peep of light
Brought genuine news of Marston’s fight.
Brave Cromwell turn’d the doubtful tide,
And conquest bless’d the rightful side;
Three thousand cavaliers lie dead,
Rupert and that bold Marquis fled;
Nobles and knights, so proud of late,
Must fine for freedom and estate.
Of these, committed to my charge,
Is Rokeby, prisoner at large;
Redmond, his page, arrived to say
He reaches Barnard’s towers to-day.
Right heavy shall his ransom be,
Unless that maid compound with thee!²¹
Go to her now—be bold of cheer,
While her soul floats ’twixt hope and fear;
It is the very change of tide,
When best the female heart is tried—
Pride, prejudice, and modesty,
Are in the current swept to sea;
And the bold swain, who plies his oar,
May lightly row his bark to shore.”

CANTO THIRD.

I.

THE hunting tribes of air and earth
Respect the brethren of their birth;
Nature, who loves the claim of kind,
Less cruel chase to each assign’d.
The falcon, poised on soaring wing,
Watches the wild-duck by the spring;
The slow-hound wakes the fox’s lair;
The greyhound presses on the hare;
The eagle pounces on the lamb;
The wolf devours the fleecy dam:
Even tiger fell, and sullen bear,
Their likeness and their lineage spare;—
Man, only, mars kind Nature’s plan,
And turns the fierce pursuit on man;
Plying war’s desultory trade,
Incursion, flight, and ambuscade.

Since Nimrod, Cush's mighty son,
At first the bloody game begun.

II.

The Indian, prowling for his prey,
Who hears the settlers track his way,
And knows in distant forest far
Camp his red brethren of the war—
He, when each double and disguise
To baffle the pursuit he tries,
Low crouching now his head to hide,
Where swampy streams through rushes glide,
Now covering with the wither'd leaves
The foot-prints that the dew receives—
He, skill'd in every silvan guile,
Knows not, nor tries, such various wile,
As Risingham, when on the wind
Arose the loud pursuit behind.
In Redesdale his youth had heard
Each art her wily dalesmen dared,
When Rookan-edge, and Redswair high,
To bugle rung and blood-hound's cry,²²
Announcing Jedwood-axe and spear,
And Lid'sdale riders in the rear;
And well his venturous life had proved
The lessons that his childhood loved.

III.

Oft had he shown, in climes afar,
Each attribute of roving war:
The sharpen'd ear, the piercing eye,
The quick resolve in danger nigh;
The speed, that in the flight or chase,
Outstripp'd the Charib's rapid race;
The steady brain, the sinewy limb,
To leap, to climb, to dive, to swim;
The iron frame, inured to bear
Each dire inclemency of air;
Nor less confirm'd to undergo
Fatigue's faint chill, and famine's throes.
These arts he proved, his life to save,
In peril oft by land and wave,
On Arawaca's desert shore,
Or where La Plata's billows roar,
When of the sons of vengeful Spain
Track'd the marauder's steps in vain;—
These arts, in Indian warfare tried,
Must save him now by Greta's side.

IV.

'T was then, in hour of utmost need,
He proved his courage, art, and speed.
Now slow he stalk'd with stealthy pace,
Now started forth in rapid race,

Of doubling back in mazy train,
 To blind the trace the dews retain;
 Now clombe the rocks projecting high,
 To baffle the pursuer's eye;
 Now sought the stream, whose brawling sound
 The echo of his footsteps drown'd.
 But if the forest verge he nears,
 There trample steeds, and glimmer spears;
 If deeper down the copse he drew,
 He heard the rangers' loud halloo,
 Beating each cover while they came,
 As if to start the silvan game.
 'Twas then—like tiger close beset
 At every pass with toil and net,
 'Counter'd, where'er he turns his glare,
 By clashing arms and torches' flare,
 Who meditates, with furious bound,
 To burst on hunter, horse, and hound,—
 'Twas then that Bertram's soul arose,
 Prompting to rush upon his foes:
 But as that crouching tiger, cow'd
 By brandish'd steel and shouting crowd,
 Retreats beneath the jungle's shroud,
 Bertram suspends his purpose stern,
 And couches in the brake and fern,
 Hiding his face, lest foemen spy
 The sparkle of his swarthy eye.²³

V.

Then Bertram might the bearing trace
 Of the bold youth who led the chase;
 Who paused to list for every sound,
 Climb every height to look around,
 Then rushing on with naked sword,
 Each dingle's bosky depth explored.
 'Twas Redmond—by the azure eye;
 'Twas Redmond—by the locks that fly
 Disorder'd from his glowing cheek;
 Mien, face, and form, young Redmond speak.
 A form more active, light, and strong,
 Ne'er shot the ranks of war along;
 The modest, yet the manly mien,
 Might grace the court of maiden queen;
 A face more fair you well might find,
 For Redmond's knew the sun and wind,
 Nor boasted, from their tinge when free,
 The charm of regularity;
 But every feature had the power
 To aid the expression of the hour:
 Whether gay wit, and humour sly,
 Danced laughing in his light-blue eye;
 Or bended brow, and glance of fire,
 And kindling cheek, spoke Erin's ire;
 Or soft and sadden'd glances show
 Her ready sympathy with woe:

Or in that wayward mood of mind,
 When various feelings are combined,
 When joy and sorrow mingle near,
 And hope's bright wings are check'd by fear,
 And rising doubts keep transport down,
 And anger lends a short-lived frown ;
 In that strange mood which maids approve,
 Even when they dare not call it love ;
 With every change his features play'd,
 As aspens show the light and shade.

VI.

Well Risingham young Redmond knew :
 And much he marvell'd that the crew,
 Roused to revenge bold Mortham dead,
 Were by that Mortham's foeman led ;
 For never felt his soul the woe,
 That wails a generous foeman low,
 Far less that sense of justice strong,
 That wreaks a generous foeman's wrong.
 But small his leisure now to pause ;
 Redmond is first, whate'er the cause :
 And twice that Redmond came so near
 Where Bertram couch'd like hunted deer,
 The very boughs his steps displace,
 Rustled against the ruffian's face,
 Who, desperate, twice prepared to start,
 And plunge his dagger in his heart !
 But Redmond turn'd a different way,
 And the bent boughs resumed their sway,
 And Bertram held it wise, unseen,
 Deeper to plunge in coppice green.
 Thus, circled in his coil, the snake,
 When roving hunters beat the brake,
 Watches with red and glistening eye,
 Prepared, if heedless step draw nigh,
 With forked tongue and venom'd fang
 Instant to dart the deadly pang ;
 But if the intruders turn aside,
 Away his coils unfolded glide,
 And through the deep savannah wind,
 Some undisturb'd retreat to find.

VII.

But Bertram, as he backward drew,
 And heard the loud pursuit renew,
 And Redmond's holló on the wind,
 Oft mutter'd in his savage mind—
 " Redmond O'Neale ! were thou and I
 Alone this day's event to try,
 With not a second here to see,
 But the grey cliff and oaken tree,—
 That voice of thine, that shouts so loud,
 Should ne'er repeat its summons proud !

No ! nor e'er try its melting power
Again in maiden's summer bower."
Eluded, now behind him die,
Faint and more faint each hostile cry;
He stands in Scargill wood alone,
Nor hears he now a harsher tone
Than the hoarse cushat's plaintive cry,
Or Greta's sound that murmurs by;
And on the dale, so lone and wild,
The summer sun in quiet smiled.

VIII.

He listen'd long with anxious heart,
Ear bent to hear, and foot to start,
And, while his stretch'd attention glows,
Refused his weary frame repose.
'Twas silence all—he laid him down,
Where purple heath profusely strown,
And throatwort with its azure bell,
And moss and thyme his cushion swell.
There, spent with toil, he listless eyed
The course of Greta's playful tide;
Beneath, her banks now eddying dun,
Now brightly gleaming to the sun,
As, dancing over rock and stone,
In yellow light her currents shone,
Matching in hue the favourite gem
Of Albin's mountain-diadem.
Then, tired to watch the currents play,
He turn'd his weary eyes away,
To where the bank opposing show'd
Its huge, square cliffs through shaggy wood.
One, prominent above the rest,
Rear'd to the sun its pale grey breast;
Around its broken summit grew
The hazel rude, and sable yew;
A thousand varied lichens dyed
Its waste and weather-beaten side;
And round its rugged basis lay,
By time or thunder rent away,
Fragments, that, from its frontlet torn,
Were mantled now by verdant thorn.
Such was the scene's wild majesty,
That fill'd stern Bertram's gazing eye.

IX.

In sullen mood he lay reclined,
Revolving, in his stormy mind,
The felon deed, the fruitless guilt,
His patron's blood by treason spilt;
A crime, it seem'd, so dire and dread,
That it had power to wake the dead.
Then, pondering on his life betray'd
By Oswald's art to Redmond's blade,

In treacherous purpose to withhold,
 So seem'd it, Mortham's promised gold,
 A deep and full revenge he vow'd
 On Redmond, forward, fierce, and proud;
 Revenge on Wilfrid—on his sire
 Redoubled vengeance, swift and dire!—
 If, in such mood, (as legends say,
 And well believed that simple day,)
 The Enemy of Man has power
 To profit by the evil hour,
 Here stood a wretch, prepared to change
 His soul's redemption for revenge!
 But though his vows, with such a fire
 Of earnest and intense desire
 For vengeance dark and fell, were made,
 As well might reach hell's lowest shade,
 No deeper clouds the grove embrown'd,
 No nether thunders shook the ground;—
 The demon knew his vassal's heart,
 And spared temptation's needless art.

X.

Of, mingled with the direful theme,
 Came Mortham's form—Was it a dream?
 Or had he seen, in vision true,
 That very Mortham whom he slew?
 Or had in living flesh appear'd
 The only man on earth he fear'd?—
 To try the mystic cause intent,
 His eyes, that on the cliff were bent,
 'Counter'd at once a dazzling glance,
 Like sunbeam flash'd from sword or lance.
 At once he started as for fight,
 But not a foeman was in sight;
 He heard the cushat's murmur hoarse,
 He heard the river's sounding course;
 The solitary woodlands lay,
 As slumbering in the summer ray.
 He gazed, like lion roused, around,
 Then sunk again upon the ground.
 'Twas but, he thought, some fitful beam,
 Glance sudden from the sparkling stream;
 Then plunged him from his gloomy train
 Of ill-connected thoughts again,
 Until a voice behind him cried,
 "Bertram! well met on Greta side."

XI.

Instant his sword was in his hand,
 As instant sunk the ready brand;
 Yet, dubious still, opposed he stood
 To him that issued from the wood:
 "Guy Denzil!—is it thou?" he said,
 "Do we two meet in Scargill shade!—"

Stand back a space!—thy purpose show,
 Whether thou comest as friend or foe.
 Report hath said, that Denzil's name
 From Rokeby's band was razed with shame."—
 "A shame I owe that hot O'Neale,
 Who told his knight, in peevish zeal,
 Of my marauding on the clowns
 Of Calverley and Bradford downs."
 I reckon not. In a war to strive,
 Where, save the leaders, none can thrive,
 Suits ill my mood; and better game
 Awaits us both, if thou'rt the same
 Unscrupulous, bold Risingham,
 Who watch'd with me in midnight dark,
 To snatch a deer from Rokeby-park.
 How think'st thou?"—"Speak thy purpose out;
 I love not mystery, or doubt."

XII.

"Then list.—Not far there lurk a crew
 Of trusty comrades, stanch and true,
 Glean'd from both factions—Roundheads, freed
 From cant of sermon and of creed;
 And Cavaliers, whose souls, like mine,
 Spurn at the bonds of discipline.
 Wiser, we judge, by dale and wold,
 A warfare of our own to hold,
 Than breathe our last on battle-down,
 For cloak or surplice, mace or crown.
 Our schemes are laid, our purpose set,
 A chief and leader lack we yet.—
 Thou art a wanderer, it is said;
 For Mortham's death, thy steps way-laid,
 Thy head at price—so say our spies,
 Who range the valley in disguise.
 Join then with us:—though wild debate
 And wrangling rend our infant state,
 Each to an equal loth to bow,
 Will yield to chief renown'd as thou."

XIII.

"Even now," thought Bertram, passion-stirr'd,
 "I call'd on hell, and hell has heard!
 What lack I, vengeance to command,
 But of stanch comrades such a band?
 This Denzil, vow'd to every evil,
 Might read a lesson to the devil.
 Well, be it so! each knave and fool
 Shall serve as my revenge's tool."—
 Aloud, "I take thy proffer, Guy,
 But tell me where thy comrades lie?"—
 "Not far from hence," Guy Denzil said;
 "Descend, and cross the river's bed,
 Where rises yonder cliff so grey."
 "Do thou," said Bertram, "lead the way."

Then mutter'd, "It is best make sure;
 Guy Denzil's faith was never pure."
 He follow'd down the steep descent,
 Then through the Greta's streams they went;
 And, when they reach'd the farther shore
 They stood the lonely cliff before.

XIV.

With wonder Bertram heard within
 The flinty rock a murmur'd din;
 But when Guy pull'd the wilding spray,
 And brambles, from its base away,
 He saw, appearing to the air,
 A little entrance, low and square,
 Like opening cell of hermit lone,
 Dark, winding through the living stone.
 Here enter'd Denzil, Bertram here;
 And loud and louder on their ear,
 As from the bowels of the earth,
 Resounded shouts of boisterous mirth.
 Of old, the cavern strait and rude,
 In slaty rock the peasant hew'd;
 And Brignall's woods, and Scargill's, wave,
 E'en now, o'er many a sister cave,²⁵
 Where, far within the darksome rift,
 The wedge and lever ply their thrift.
 But war had silenced rural trade,
 And the deserted mine was made
 The banquet-hall, and fortress too,
 Of Denzil and his desperate crew.—
 There Guilt his anxious revel kept;
 There, on his sordid pallet, slept
 Guilt-born Excess,—the goblet drain'd,
 Still in his slumbering grasp retain'd;
 Regret was there, his eye still cast
 With vain repining on the past;
 Among the feasters waited near
 Sorrow, and unrepentant Fear,
 And Blasphemy, to frenzy driven,
 With his own crimes reproaching heaven;
 While Bertram show'd, amid the crew,
 The Master-Fiend that Milton drew.

XV.

Hark! the loud revel wakes again,
 To greet the leader of the train.
 Behold the group by the pale lamp,
 That struggles with the earthy damp.
 By what strange features Vice hath known,
 To single out and mark her own!
 Yet some there are, whose brows retain
 Less deeply stamp'd her brand and stain.
 See yon pale stripling! when a boy,
 A mother's pride, a father's joy!

Now, 'gainst the vault's rude walls reclined,
 An early image fills his mind :
 The cottage, once his sire's, he sees
 Embower'd upon the banks of Tees ;
 He views sweet Winston's woodland scene,
 And shares the dance on Gainford-green.
 A tear is springing—but the zest
 Of some wild tale, or brutal jest,
 Hath to loud laughter stirr'd the rest.
 On him they call, the aptest mate
 For jovial song and merry feat :
 Fast flies his dream—with dauntless air,
 As one victorious o'er Despair,
 He bids the ruddy cup go round,
 Till sense and sorrow both are drown'd ;
 And soon, in merry wassail, he,
 The life of all their revelry,
 Peals his loud song !—The muse has found
 Her blossoms on the wildest ground,
 Mid noxious weeds at random strew'd,
 Themselves all profitless and rude.—
 With desperate merriment he sung,
 The cavern to the chorus rung ;
 Yet mingled with his reckless glee
 Remorse's bitter agony.

XVI.

Sung.

O, Brignall banks are wild and fair,
 And Greta woods are green,
 And you may gather garlands there,
 Would grace a summer queen.
 And as I rode by Dalton-hall,
 Beneath the turrets high,
 A Maiden on the castle wall
 Was singing merrily,—

CHORUS.

“O, Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
 And Greta woods are green ;
 I'd rather rove with Edmund there,
 Than reign our English queen.”—

“If, Maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
 To leave both tower and town,
 Thou first must guess what life lead we,
 That dwell by dale and down ?
 And if thou canst that riddle read,
 As read full well you may,
 Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed,
 As blithe as Queen of May.”—

CHORUS.

Yet sung she, “Brignall banks are fair,
 And Greta woods are green ;

I'd rather rove with Edmund there,
Than reign our English queen.

XVII.

"I read you, by your bugle horn,
And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a ranger sworn,
To keep the king's greenwood." —
"A Ranger, lady, winds his horn,
And 'tis at peep of light;
His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night." —

CHORUS.

Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay;
I would I were with Edmund there,
To reign his Queen of May!

"With burnish'd brand and musketoon,
So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold Dragoon,
That lists the tuck of drum." —
"I list no more the tuck of drum,
No more the trumpet hear;
But when the beetle sounds his hum,
My comrades take the spear.

CHORUS.

"And, O! though Brignall banks be fair,
And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare,
Would reign my Queen of May!

XVIII.

"Maiden! a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I'll die!
The fiend, whose lantern lights the mead,
Were better mate than I!
And when I'm with my comrades met,
Beneath the greenwood bough,
What once we were we all forget,
Nor think what we are now.

CHORUS.

"Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer queen."

When Edmund ceased his simple song,
Was silence on the sullen throng,
Till waked some ruder mate their glee
With note of coarser minstrelay.

But, far apart, in dark divan,
 Denzil and Bertram many a plan,
 Of import foul and fierce, design'd,
 While still on Bertram's grasping mind
 The wealth of murder'd Mortham hung;
 Though half he fear'd his daring tongue,
 When it should give his wishes birth,
 Might raise a spectre from the earth!

XIX.

At length his wondrous tale he told:
 When, scornful, smiled his comrade bold;
 For, train'd in license of a court,
 Religion's self was Denzil's sport;
 Then judge in what contempt he held
 The visionary tales of eld!
 His awe for Bertram scarce repress'd
 The unbeliever's sneering jest.
 "Twere hard," he said, "for sage or seer,
 To spell the subject of your fear;
 Nor do I boast the art renown'd,
 Vision and omen to expound.
 Yet, faith if I must needs afford
 To spectre watching treasured hoard,
 As ban-dog keeps his master's roof,
 Bidding the plunderer stand aloof,
 This doubt remains—thy goblin gaunt
 Hath chosen ill his ghostly haunt;
 For why his guard on Mortham hold,
 When Rokeby castle hath the gold
 Thy patron won on Indian soil,
 By stealth, by piracy, and spoil?"—

XX.

At this he paused—for angry shame
 Lower'd on the brow of Risingham.
 He blush'd to think, that he should seem
 Assertor of an airy dream,
 And gave his wrath another theme.
 "Denzil," he says, "though lowly laid,
 Wrong not the memory of the dead;
 For, while he lived, at Mortham's look
 Thy very soul, Guy Denzil, shook!
 And when he tax'd thy breach of word
 To yon fair rose of Allenford,
 I saw thee crouch like chasten'd hound,
 Whose back the huntsman's lash hath found.
 Nor dare to call his foreign wealth
 The spoil of piracy or stealth;
 He won it bravely with his brand,
 When Spain waged warfare with our land.²⁵
 Mark, too—I brook no idle jeer,
 Nor couple Bertram's name with fear;
 Mine is but half the demon's lot,
 For I believe, but tremble not.—

Enough of this.—Say, why this hoard
 Thou deem'st at Rokeby castle stored;
 Or think'st that Mortham would bestow
 His treasure with his faction's foe?"

XXI.

Soon quench'd was Denzil's ill-timed mirth;
 Rather he would have seen the earth
 Give to ten thousand spectres birth,
 Than venture to awake to flame
 The deadly wrath of Risingham.
 Submit he answer'd,—“Mortham's mind,
 Thou know'st, to joy was ill inclined.
 In youth, 'tis said, a gallant free,
 A lusty reveller was he;
 But since return'd from over sea,
 A sullen and a silent mood
 Hath numb'd the current of his blood.
 Hence he refused each kindly call
 To Rokeby's hospitable hall;
 And our stout knight, at dawn of morn
 Who loved to hear the bugle-horn,
 Nor less, when eve his oaks embrown'd,
 To see the ruddy cup go round,
 Took umbrage that a friend so near
 Refused to share his chase and cheer;
 Thus did the kindred barons jar,
 Ere they divided in the war.
 Yet, trust me, friend, Matilda fair
 Of Mortham's wealth is destined heir.”—

XXII.

“Destined to her! to yon slight maid!
 The prize my life had wellnigh paid,
 When 'gainst Laroche, by Cayo's wave,
 I fought, my patron's wealth to save!—
 Denzil, I knew him long, yet ne'er
 Knew him that joyous cavalier,
 Whom youthful friends and early fame
 Call'd soul of gallantry and game.
 A moody man, he sought our crew,
 Desperate and dark, whom no one knew;
 And rose, as men with us must rise,
 By scorning life and all its ties.
 On each adventure rash he roved,
 As danger for itself he loved;
 On his sad brow nor mirth nor wine
 Could e'er one wrinkled knot untwine;
 Ill was the omen if he smiled,
 For 'twas in peril stern and wild;
 But when he laugh'd, each luckless mate
 Might hold our fortune desperate.
 Foremost he fought in every broil,
 Then scornful turn'd him from the spoil;

Nay, often strove to bar the way
Between his comrades and their prey;
Preaching, even then, to such as we,
Hot with our dear-bought victory,
Of mercy and humanity.

XXIII.

"I loved him well—His fearless part,
His gallant leading, won my heart.
And after each victorious fight,
'T was I that wrangled for his right,
Redeem'd his portion of the prey
That greedier mates had torn away;
In field and storm thrice saved his life,
And once amid our comrades' strife.—"²⁷
Yes, I have loved thee! Well hath proved
My toil, my danger, how I loved!
Yet will I mourn no more thy fate,
Ingrate in life, in death ingrate.—
Rise if thou canst!" he look'd around,
And sternly stamp'd upon the ground—
"Rise, with thy bearing proud and high,
Even as this morn it met mine eye,
And give me, if thou darest, the lie!"
He paused—then, calm and passion-freed,
Bade Denzil with his tale proceed.

XXIV.

"Bertram, to thee I need not tell,
What thou hast cause to wot so well,
How Superstition's nets were twined
Around the Lord of Mortham's mind!
But since he drove thee from his tower,
A maid he found in Greta's bower,
Whose speech, like David's harp, had sway,
To charm his evil fiend away.
I know not if her features moved
Remembrance of the wife he loved;
But he would gaze upon her eye,
Till his mood soften'd to a sigh.
He, whom no living mortal sought
To question of his secret thought,
Now every thought and care confess'd
To his fair niece's faithful breast;
Nor was there aught of rich and rare,
In earth, in ocean, or in air,
But it must deck Matilda's hair.
Her love still bound him unto life;
But then awoke the civil strife,
And menials bore, by his commands,
Three coffers, with their iron bands,
From Mortham's vault, at midnight deep,
To her lone bower in Rokeby-Keep,
Ponderous with gold and plate of pride,
His gift, if he in battle died."—

XXV.

"Then Denzil, as I guess, lays train,
 These iron-banded chests to gain;
 Else, wherefore should he hover here,
 Where many a peril waits him near,
 For all his feats of war and peace,
 For plunder'd boors, and harts of greese?
 Since through the hamlets as he fared,
 What hearth has Guy's marauding spared,
 Or where the chase that hath not rung
 With Denzil's bow, at midnight strung?"—
 "I hold my wont—my rangers go,
 Even now to track a milk-white doe.
 By Rokeby-hall she takes her lair,
 In Greta wood she harbours fair,
 And when my huntsman marks her way,
 What think'st thou, Bertram, of the prey?
 Were Rokeby's daughter in our power,
 We rate her ransom at her dower."—

XXVI.

"'Tis well!—there's vengeance in the thought,
 Matilda is by Wilfrid sought;
 And hot-brain'd Redmond, too, 'tis said,
 Pays lover's homage to the maid.
 Bertram she scorn'd—If met by chance,
 She turn'd from me her shuddering glance,
 Like a nice dame, that will not brook
 On what she hates and loathes to look;
 She told to Mortham she could ne'er
 Behold me without secret fear,
 Foreboding evil:—She may rue
 To find her prophecy fall true!—
 The war has weeded Rokeby's train,
 Few followers in his halls remain;
 If thy scheme miss, then, brief and bold,
 We are enow to storm the hold;
 Bear off the plunder, and the dame,
 And leave the castle all in flame."—

XXVII.

"Still art thou Valour's venturous son!
 Yet ponder first the risk to run:
 The menials of the castle, true,
 And stubborn to their charge, though few
 The wall to scale—the moat to cross—
 The wicket-grate—the inner fosse"—
 —"Fool! if we blench for toys like these,
 On what fair guerdon can we seize?
 Our hardest venture, to explore
 Some wretched peasant's fenceless door,
 And the best prize we bear away,
 The earnings of his sordid day."—
 "A while thy hasty taunt forbear:
 In sight of road more sure and fair,

Thou wouldst not choose, in blindfold wrath,
 Or wantonness, a desperate path?
 List, then;—for vantage or assault,
 From gilded vane to dungeon vault,
 Each pass of Rokeby-house I know:
 There is one postern, dark and low,
 That issues at a secret spot,
 By most neglected or forgot.
 Now, could a spial of our train
 On fair pretext admittance gain,
 That sally-port might be unbar'd:
 Then, vain were battlement and ward!"--

XXVIII.

"Now speak'st thou well:—to me the same
 If force or art shall urge the game
 Indifferent, if like fox I wind,
 Or spring like tiger on the hind.—
 But, hark! our merry men so gay
 Troll forth another roundelay."²²--

Song.

"A weary lot is thine, fair maid,
 A weary lot is thine!
 To pull the thorn thy brow to braid,
 And press the rue for wine!
 A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,
 A feather of the blue,
 A doublet of the Lincoln green,—
 No more of me you knew,
 My love
 No more of me you knew.

"This morn is merry June, I trow
 The rose is budding fain;^a
 But she shall bloom in winter snow
 Ere we two meet again."
 He turn'd his charger as he spake,
 Upon the river shore,
 He gave his bridle-reins a shake,
 Said, "Adieu for evermore,
 My love!
 And adieu for evermore."²³

XXIX.

"What youth is this, your band among,
 The best for minstrelsy and song?
 In his wild notes seem aptly met
 A strain of pleasure and regret."²⁴--

^a MS.—*To the Printer*.—"The abruptness as to the song is unavoidable. The music of the drinking party could only operate as a sudden interruption to Bertram's conversation, however naturally it might be introduced among the feasters, who were at some distance.

"*Fain*, in old English and Scotch, expresses, I think, a propensity to give and receive pleasurable emotions, a sort of fondness which may, without harshness, I think, be applied to a rose in the act of blooming. You remember 'Jockey fow and Jenny fain.'—W.S."

"Edmund of Winston is his name;
 The hamlet sounded with the fame
 Of early hopes his childhood gave,—
 Now center'd all in Brignall cave!
 I watch him well—his wayward course
 Shows oft a tincture of remorse.
 Some early love-shaft grazed his heart,
 And oft the scar will ache and smart.
 Yet is he useful;—of the rest,
 By fits, the darling and the jest,
 His harp, his story, and his lay,
 Oft aid the idle hours away:
 When unemploy'd, each fiery mate
 Is ripe for mutinous debate.
 He tuned his strings e'en now—again
 He wakes them, with a blither strain."

XXX.

Song.

ALLEN-A-DALE.

Allen-a-Dale has no faggot for burning,
 Allen-a-Dale has no furrow for turning,
 Allen-a-Dale has no fleece for the spinning,
 Yet Allen-a-Dale has red gold for the winning.
 Come, read me my riddle! come, hearken my tale!
 And tell me the craft of bold Allen-a-Dale.

The Baron of Ravensworth prances in pride,
 And he views his domains upon Arkindale side,
 The mere for his net, and the land for his game,
 The chase for the wild, and the park for the tame;
 Yet the fish of the lake, and the deer of the vale,
 Are less free to Lord Dacre than Allen-a-Dale!

Allen-a-Dale was ne'er belted a knight,
 Though his spur be as sharp, and his blade be as bright;
 Allen-a-Dale is no baron or lord,
 Yet twenty tall yoemen will draw at his word;
 And the best of our nobles his bonnet will vail,
 Who at Rere-cross²⁹ on Stanmore meets Allen-a-Dale.

Allen-a-Dale to his wooing is come;
 The mother, she ask'd of his household and home:
 "Though the castle of Richmond stand fair on the hill,
 My hall," quoth bold Allen, "shows gallanter still;
 'Tis the blue vault of heaven, with its crescent so pale,
 And with all its bright spangles!" said Allen-a-Dale.

The father was steel, and the mother was stone;
 They lifted the latch, and they bade him be gone;
 But loud, on the morrow, their wail and their cry:
 He had laugh'd on the lass with his bonny black eye,
 And she fled to the forest to hear a love-tale,
 And the youth it was told by was Allen-a-Dale!

XXXI.

"Thou see'st that, whether sad or gay,
Love mingles ever in his lay.
But when his boyish wayward fit
Is o'er, he hath address and wit;
O! 'tis a brain of fire, can ape
Each dialect, each various shape."—
"Nay, then, to aid thy project, Guy—
Soft! who comes here?"—"My trusty spy.
Speak, Hamlin! hast thou lodged our deer?"—
"I have—but two fair stags are near.
I watch'd her, as she slowly stray'd
From Egliston up Thorsgill glade;
But Wilfrid Wycliffe sought her side,
And then young Redmond, in his pride,
Shot down to meet them on their way:
Much, as it seem'd, was theirs to say:
There's time to pitch both toil and net,
Before their path be homeward set."
A hurried and a whisper'd speech
Did Bertram's will to Denzil teach;
Who, turning to the robber band,
Bade four, the bravest, take the brand.

CANTO FOURTH.

I.

WHEN Denmark's raven soar'd on high,
Triumphant through Northumbrian sky,
Till, hovering near, her fatal croak
Bade Reged's Britons dread the yoke,³⁰
And the broad shadow of her wing
Blacken'd each cataract and spring,
Where Tees in tumult leaves his source,
Thundering o'er Caldron and High-Forco
Beneath the shade the Northmen came,
Fix'd on each vale a Runic name,³¹
Rear'd high their altar's rugged stone,
And gave their Gods the land they won.
Then, Balder, one bleak garth was thine,
And one sweet brooklet's silver line,
And Woden's Croft did title gain
From the stern Father of the Slain;
But to the Monarch of the Mace,
That held in fight the foremost place,
To Odin's son, and Sifa's spouse,
Near Stratforth high they paid their vows,
Remember'd Thor's victorious fame,
And gave the dell the Thunderer's name.

II.

Yet Scald or Kemper err'd, I ween,
 Who gave that soft and quiet scene,
 With all its varied light and shade,
 And every little sunny glade,
 And the blithe brook that strolls along
 Its pebbled bed with summer song,
 To the grim God of blood and scar,
 The grisly King of Northern War.
 O, better were its banks assign'd
 To spirits of a gentler kind !
 For where the thicket-groups recede,
 And the rath primrose decks the mead,
 The velvet grass seems carpet meet
 For the light fairies' lively feet.
 Yon tufted knoll, with daisies strown,
 Might make proud Oberon a throne,
 While, hidden in the thicket nigh,
 Puck should brood o'er his frolic sly ;
 And where profuse the wood-vetch clings
 Round ash and elm, in verdant rings,
 Its pale and azure-pencill'd flower
 Should canopy Titania's bower.

III.

Here rise no cliffs the vale to shade
 But, skirting every sunny glade,
 In fair variety of green
 The woodland lends its silvan screen.
 Hoary, yet haughty, frowns the oak,
 Its boughs by weight of ages broke ;
 And towers erect, in sable spire,
 The pine-tree scathed by lightning-fire
 The drooping ash and birch, between,
 Hang their fair tresses o'er the green,
 And all beneath, at random grow
 Each coppice dwarf of varied show,
 Or, round the stems profusely twined,
 Fling summer odours on the wind.
 Such varied group Urbino's hand
 Round Him of Tarsus nobly plann'd,
 What time he bade proud Athens own
 On Mars's Mount the God Unknown !
 Then grey Philosophy stood nigh,
 Though bent by age, in spirit high :
 There rose the scar-seam'd veteran's spears,
 There Grecian Beauty bent to hear,
 While Childhood at her foot was placed,
 Or clung delighted to her waist.

IV.

"And rest we here," Matilda said,
 And sat her in the varying shade.
 "Chance-met, we well may steal an hour,
 To friendship due, from fortune's power.

Thou, Wilfrid, ever kind, must lend
Thy counsel to thy sister-friend;
And, Redmond, thou, at my behest,
No farther urge thy desperate 'quest.
For to my care a charge is left,
Dangerous to one of aid bereft;
Wellnigh an orphan, and alone,
Captive her sire, her house o'erthrown.*
Wilfrid, with wonted kindness graced,
Beside her on the turf she placed;
Then paused, with downcast look and eye,
Nor bade young Redmond seat him nigh.
Her conscious diffidence he saw,
Drew backward, as in modest awe,
And sat a little space removed,
Unmark'd to gaze on her he loved.

V.

Wreathed in its dark-brown rings, her hair
Half hid Matilda's forehead fair,
Half hid and half reveal'd to view
Her full dark eye of hazel hue.
The rose, with faint and feeble streak,
So slightly tinged the maiden's cheek,
That you had said her hue was pale;
But if she faced the summer gale,
Or spoke, or sung, or quicker moved,
Or heard the praise of those she loved,
Or when of interest was express'd
Aught that waked feeling in her breast,
The mantling blood in ready play
Rivall'd the blush of rising day.
There was a soft and pensive grace,
A cast of thought upon her face,
That suited well the forehead high,
The eyelash dark, and downcast eye;
The mild expression spoke a mind
In duty firm, composed, resign'd;—
'Tis that which Roman art has given,
To mark their maiden Queen of Heaven.
In hours of sport, that mood gave way
To Fancy's light and frolic play;
And when the dance, or tale, or song,
In harmless mirth sped time along,
Full oft her doting sire would call
His Maud the merriest of them all.
But days of war and civil crime,
Allow'd but ill such festal time,
And her soft pensiveness of brow
Had deepen'd into sadness now.
In Marston field her father ta'en,
Her friends dispersed, brave Mortham slain,
While every ill her soul foretold,
From Oswald's thirst of power and gold,

And boding thoughts that she must part
 With a soft vision of her heart,—
 All lower'd around the lovely maid,
 To darken her dejection's shade.

VI.

Who has not heard—while Erin yet
 Strove 'gainst the Saxon's iron bit—
 Who has not heard how brave O'Neale
 In English blood imbrued his steel,³²
 Against St George's cross blazed high
 The banners of his Tanistry,
 To fiery Essex gave the foil,
 And reign'd a prince on Ulster's soil?
 But chief arose his victor pride,
 When that brave Marshal fought and died,³²
 And Avon-Duff to ocean bore
 His billows red with Saxon gore.
 'Twas first in that disastrous fight,
 Rokeby and Mortham proved their might.
 There had they fallen amongst the rest,
 But pity touch'd a chieftain's breast—
 The Tanist he to great O'Neale,³⁴
 He check'd his followers' bloody zeal,
 To quarter took the kinsman bold,
 And bore them to his mountain-hold,
 Gave them each silvan joy to know,
 Slieve-Donard's cliffs and woods could show;
 Shared with them Erin's festal cheer,
 Show'd them the chase of wolf and deer,
 And, when a fitting time was come,
 Safe and unransom'd sent them home,
 Loaded with many a gift, to prove
 A generous foe's respect and love.

VII.

Years speed away. On Rokeby's head
 Some touch of early snow was shed;
 Calm he enjoy'd, by Greta's wave,
 The peace which James the Peaceful gave,
 While Mortham, far beyond the main,
 Waged his fierce wars on Indian Spain.—
 It chanced upon a wintry night,
 That whiten'd Stanmore's stormy height,
 The chase was o'er, the stag was kill'd,
 In Rokeby hall the cups were fill'd,
 And by the huge stone chimney sate
 The Knight in hospitable state.
 Moonless the sky, the hour was late,
 When a loud summons shook the gate,
 And sore for entrance and for aid
 A voice of foreign accent pray'd.
 The porter answer'd to the call,
 And instant rush'd into the hall

A Man, whose aspect and attire
Startled the circle by the fire.

VIII.

His plaited hair in elf-locks spread
Around his bare and matted head;
On leg and thigh, close stretch'd and trim,
His vesture show'd the sinewy limb;
In saffron dyed, a linen vest
Was frequent folded round his breast;
A mantle long and loose he wore,
Shaggy with ice, and stain'd with gore.
He clasp'd a burden to his heart,
And, resting on a knotted dart,
The snow from hair and beard he shook,
And round him gazed with wilder'd look.
Then up the hall, with staggering pace,
He hasten'd by the blaze to place,
Half lifeless from the bitter air,
His load, a Boy of Beauty rare.
To Rokeby, next, he louted low,
Then stood erect his tale to show,
With wild majestic port and tone,
Like envoy of some barbarous throne.³³
"Sir Richard, Lord of Rokeby, hear!
Turlough O'Neale salutes thee dear;
He graces thee, and to thy care
Young Redmond gives, his grandson fair,
He bids thee breed him as thy son,
For Turlough's days of joy are done;
And other lords have seized his land,
And faint and feeble is his hand;
And all the glory of Tyrone
Is like a morning vapour flown.
To bind the duty on thy soul,
He bids thee think on Erin's bowl!
If any wrong the young O'Neale,
He bids thee think of Erin's steel.
To Morham first this charge was due,
But, in his absence, honours you.—
Now is my master's message by,
And Ferraught will contented die."

IX.

His look grew fix'd, his cheek grew pale,
He sunk when he had told his tale;
For, hid beneath his mantle wide,
A mortal wound was in his side.
Vain was all aid—in terror wild,
And sorrow, scream'd the orphan Child.
Poor Ferraught raised his wistful eyes,
And faintly strove to soothe his cries,
All reckless of his dying pain,
He blest, and blest him o'er again!

And kiss'd the little hands out spread,
 And kiss'd and cross'd the infant head,
 And, in his native tongue and phrase,
 Pray'd to each saint to watch his days;
 Then all his strength together drew,
 The charge to Rokeby to renew.
 When half was falter'd from his breast,
 And half by dying signs express'd,
 "Bless thee, O'Neale!" he faintly said,
 And thus the faithful spirit fled.

X.

'Twas long ere soothing might prevail
 Upon the Child to end the tale;
 And then he said, that from his home
 His grandsire had been forced to roam,
 Which had not been if Redmond's hand
 Had but had strength to draw the brand,
 The brand of Llenaugh More the Red,
 That hung beside the grey wolf's head.—
 'Twas from his broken phrase descried,
 His foster father was his guide,
 Who, in his charge, from Ulster bore
 Letters, and gifts a goodly store;
 But ruffians met them in the wood,—
 Ferraight in battle boldly stood,
 Till wounded and o'erpower'd at length,
 And stripp'd of all, his failing strength
 Just bore him here—and then the child
 Renew'd again his moaning wild.

XI.

The tear, down childhood's cheek that flows,
 Is like the dewdrop on the rose;
 When next the summer breeze comes by,
 And waves the bush, the flower is dry.
 Won by their care, the orphan Child
 Soon on his new protector smiled,
 With dimpled cheek and eye so fair,
 Through his thick curls of flaxen hair,
 But blithest laugh'd that cheek and eye,
 When Rokeby's little Maid was nigh;
 'T was his, with elder brother's pride,
 Matilda's tottering steps to guide;
 His native lays in Irish tongue,
 To soothe her infant ear he sung,
 And primrose twined with daisy fair,
 To form a chaplet for her hair.
 By lawn, by grove, by brooklet's strand,
 The children still were hand in hand,
 And good Sir Richard smiling eyed
 The early knot so kindly tied.

XII.

But summer months bring wilding shoot
 From bud to bloom, from bloom to fruit:

And years draw on our human span,
From child to boy, from boy to man;
And soon in Rokeby's woods is seen
A gallant boy in hunter's green.
He loves to wake the felon boar,
In his dark haunt on Greta's shore,
And loves, against the deer so dun,
To draw the shaft, or lift the gun:
Yet more he loves, in autumn prime,
The hazel's spreading boughs to climb,
And down its cluster'd stores to hail,
Where young Matilda holds her veil.
And she, whose veil receives the shower,
Is alter'd too, and knows her power;
Assumes a monitress' pride,
Her Redmond's dangerous sports to chide;
Yet listens still to hear him tell
How the grim wild-boar fought and fell,
How at his fall the bugle rung,
Till rock and greenwood answer flung;
Then blesses her, that man can find
A pastime of such savage kind!

XIII.

But Redmond knew to weave his tale
So well with praise of wood and dale,
And knew so well each point to trace,
Gives living interest to the chase,
And knew so well o'er all to throw
His spirit's wild romantic glow,
That, while she blamed, and while she fear'd,
She loved each venturous tale she heard.
Oft, too, when drifted snow and rain
To bower and hall their steps restrain,
Together they explor'd the page
Of glowing bard or gifted sage;
Oft, placed the evening fire beside,
The minstrel art alternate tried,
While gladsome harp and lively lay
Bade winter-night flit fast away:
Thus, from their childhood blending still
Their sport, their study, and their skill,
An union of the soul they prove,
But must not think that it was love.
But though they dared not, envious Fame
Soon dared to give that union name;
And when so often, side by side,
From year to year the pair she eyed,
She sometimes blamed the good old Knight,
As dull of ear and dim of sight,
Sometimes his purpose would declare,
That young O'Neale should wed his heir.

XIV.

The suit of Wilfrid rent disguise
And bandage from the lovers' eyes;

'T was plain that Oswald, for his son,
 Had Rokeby's favour wellnigh won.
 Now must they meet with change of cheer,
 With mutual looks of shame and fear;
 Now must Matilda stray apart,
 To school her disobedient heart :
 And Redmond now alone must rue
 The love he never can subdue.
 But factions rose, and Rokeby sware,
 No rebel's son should wed his heir;
 And Redmond, nurtured while a child
 In many a bard's traditions wild,
 Now sought the lonely wood or stream,
 To cherish there a happier dream,
 Of maiden won by sword or lance,
 As in the regions of romance;
 And count the heroes of his line,
 Great Nial of the Pledges Nine,³⁶
 Shane-Dymas³⁷ wild, and Geraldine,³⁸
 And Connan-more, who vow'd his race
 For ever to the fight and chase,
 And cursed him, of his lineage born,
 Should sheathe the sword to reap the corn,
 Or leave the mountain and the wold,
 To shroud himself in castled hold.
 From such examples hope he drew,
 And brighten'd as the trumpet blew.

XV.

If brides were won by heart and blade,
 Redmond had both, his cause to aid,
 And all beside of nurture rare
 That might beseem a baron's heir.
 Turlough O'Neale, in Erin's strife,
 On Rokeby's Lord bestow'd his life,
 And well did Rokeby's generous Knight
 Young Redmond for the deed requite.
 Nor was his liberal care and cost
 Upon the gallant stripling lost :
 Seek the North Riding broad and wide,
 Like Redmond none could steed bestride ;
 From Tynemouth search to Cumberland,
 Like Redmond none could wield a brand ;
 And then, of humour kind and free,
 And bearing him to each degree
 With frank and fearless courtesy,
 There never youth was form'd to steal
 Upon the heart like brave O'Neale.

XVI.

Sir Richard loved him as his son ;
 And when the days of peace were done,
 And to the gales of war he gave
 The banner of his sires to wave,

Redmond, distinguish'd by his care,
 He chose that honour'd flag to bear,
 And named his page—the next degree,
 In that old time to chivalry.³⁹
 In five pitch'd fields he well maintain'd
 The honour'd place his worth obtain'd,
 And high was Redmond's youthful name
 Blazed in the roll of martial fame.
 Had fortune smiled on Marston fight,
 The eve had seen him dubb'd a knight;
 Twice, 'mid the battle's doubtful strife,
 Of Rokeby's Lord he saved the life,
 But when he saw him prisoner made,
 He kiss'd and then resign'd his blade,
 And yielded him an easy prey
 To those who led the Knight away;
 Resolved Matilda's sire should prove
 In prison, as in fight, his love.

XVII.

When lovers meet in adverse hour,
 'Tis like a sun-glimpse through a shower,
 A watery ray, an instant seen
 The darkly closing clouds between.
 As Redmond on the turf reclined,
 The past and present fill'd his mind:
 "It was not thus," Affection said,
 "I dream'd of my return, dear maid!
 Not thus, when from thy trembling hand,
 I took the banner and the brand;
 When round me, as the bugles blew,
 Their blades three hundred warriors drew,
 And, while the standard I unroll'd,
 Clash'd their bright arms, with clamour bold.
 Where is that banner now?—its pride
 Lies whelm'd in Ouse's sullen tide!
 Where now these warriors?—in their gore,
 They cumber Marston's dismal moor!
 And what avails a useless brand,
 Held by a captive's shackled hand,
 That only would his life retain,
 To aid thy sire to bear his chain!"
 Thus Redmond to himself apart:
 Nor lighter was his rival's heart;
 For Wilfrid, while his generous soul
 Disdain'd to profit by control,
 By many a sign could mark too plain,
 Save with such aid, his hopes were vain.—
 But now Matilda's accents stole
 On the dark visions of their soul,
 And bade their mournful musing fly,
 Like mist before the zephyr's sigh.

XVIII.

"I need not to my friends recall,
 How Mortham shunn'd my father's hall;

A man of silence and of woe,
 Yet ever anxious to bestow
 On my poor self whate'er could prove
 A kinsman's confidence and love.
 My feeble aid could sometimes chase
 The clouds of sorrow for a space;
 But oftener, fix'd beyond my power,
 I mark'd his deep despondence lower.
 One dismal cause, by all unguess'd,
 His fearful confidence confess'd;
 And twice it was my hap to see
 Examples of that agony,
 Which for a season can o'erstrain
 And wreck the structure of the brain.
 He had the awful power to know
 The approaching mental overthrow,
 And while his mind had courage yet
 To struggle with the dreadful fit,
 The victim writhed against its throes,
 Like wretch beneath a murderer's blows.
 This malady, I well could mark,
 Sprung from some direful cause and dark;
 But still he kept its source conceal'd,
 Till arming for the civil field;
 Then in my charge he bade me hold
 A treasure huge of gems and gold,
 With this disjointed dismal scroll,
 That tells the secret of his soul,
 In such wild words as oft betray
 A mind by anguish forced astray."—

XIX.

MORTHAM'S HISTORY.

"Matilda! thou hast seen me start,
 As if a dagger thrill'd my heart,
 When it has happ'd some casual phrase
 Waked memory of my former days.
 Believe, that few can backward cast
 Their thoughts with pleasure on the past;
 But I!—my youth was rash and vain,
 And blood and rage my manhood stain,
 And my grey hairs must now descend
 To my cold grave without a friend!
 Even thou, Matilda, wilt disown
 Thy kinsman, when his guilt is known.
 And must I lift the bloody veil,
 That hides my dark and fatal tale!
 I must—I will—Pale phantom, cease!
 Leave me one little hour in peace!
 Thus haunted, think'st thou I have skill
 Thine own commission to fulfil?
 Or, while thou point'st with gesture fierce,
 Thy blighted cheek, thy bloody hearse,
 How can I paint thee as thou wert,
 So fair in face, so warm in heart!"

XX.

"Yes, she was fair!—Matilda, thou
 Hast a soft sadness on thy brow;
 But hers was like the sunny glow,
 That laughs on earth and all below!
 We wedded secret—there was need—
 Differing in country and in creed;
 And, when to Mortham's tower she came,
 We mentioned not her race and name,
 Until thy sire, who fought afar,
 Should turn him home from foreign war,
 On whose kind influence we relied
 To soothe her father's ire and pride.
 Few months we lived retired, unknown,
 To all but one dear friend alone,
 One darling friend—I spare his shame,
 I will not write the villain's name!
 My trespasses I might forget,
 And sue in vengeance for the debt
 Due by a brother worm to me,
 Ungrateful to God's clemency,
 That spared me penitential time,
 Nor cut me off amid my crime.—

XXI.

"A kindly smile to all she lent,
 But on her husband's friend 't was bent
 So kind, that from its harmless glee,
 The wretch misconstrued villany.
 Repulsed in his presumptuous love,
 A vengeful snare the traitor wove.
 Alone we sat—the flask had flow'd,
 My blood with heat unwonted glow'd,
 When through the alley'd walk we spied
 With hurried step my Edith glide,
 Cowering beneath the verdant screen,
 As one unwilling to be seen.
 Words cannot paint the fiendish smile
 That curl'd the traitor's cheek the while!
 Fiercely I question'd of the cause;
 He made a cold and artful pause,
 Then pray'd it might not chafe my mood—
 'There was a gallant in the wood!
 We had been shooting at the deer;
 My cross-bow (evil chance!) was near:
 That ready weapon of my wrath
 I caught, and, hasting up the path,
 In the yew grove my wife I found,—
 A stranger's arms her neck had bound!
 I mark'd his heart—the bow I drew—
 I loosed the shaft—'t was more than true!
 I found my Edith's dying charms
 Lock'd in her murder'd brother's arms!—
 He came in secret to enquire
 Her state, and reconcile her sire.

XXII.

"All fled my rage—the villain first,
 Whose craft my jealousy had nursed;
 He sought in far and foreign clime
 To 'scape the vengeance of his crime.
 The manner of the slaughter done
 Was known to few, my guilt to none;
 Some tale my faithful steward framed—
 I know not what—of shaft mis-aim'd;
 And even from those the act who knew,
 He hid the hand from which it flew.
 Untouch'd by human laws I stood,
 But God had heard the cry of blood!
 There is a blank upon my mind,
 A fearful vision ill-defined,
 Of raving till my flesh was torn,
 Of dungeon-bolts and fetters worn—
 And when I waked to woe more mild,
 And question'd of my infant child—
 (Have I not written, that she bare
 A boy, like summer morning fair?)—
 With looks confused, my menials tell
 That armed men in Mortham dell
 Beset the nurse's evening way,
 And bore her, with her charge, away.
 My faithless friend, and none but he,
 Could profit by this villany;
 Him then, I sought, with purpose dread
 Of treble vengeance on his head!
 He 'scaped me—but my bosom's wound
 Some faint relief from wandering found;
 And over distant land and sea
 I bore my load of misery.

XXIII.

"T was then that fate my footsteps led
 Among a daring crew and dread,
 With whom full oft my hated life
 I ventured in such desperate strife,
 That even my fierce associates saw
 My frantic deeds with doubt and awe.
 Much then I learned, and much can show,
 Of human guilt and human woe,
 Yet ne'er have, in my wanderings, known
 A wretch, whose sorrows matched my own!—
 It chanced, that after battle fray,
 Upon the bloody field we lay;
 The yellow moon her lustre shed
 Upon the wounded and the dead,
 While, sense in toil and wassail drown'd,
 My ruffian comrades slept around,
 There came a voice—its silver tone
 Was soft, Matilda, as thine own—
 'Ah, wretch!' it said, 'what makest thou here,
 While unavenged my bloody bier?

While unprotected lives mine heir,
Without a father's name and care?'

XXIV.

"I heard—obey'd—and homeward drew.
The fiercest of our desperate crew
I brought, at time of need to aid
My purposed vengeance, long delay'd.
But, humble be my thanks to Heaven,
That better hopes and thoughts has given,
And by our Lord's dear prayer has taught,
Mercy by mercy must be bought!—
Let me in misery rejoice—
I've seen his face—I've heard his voice—
I claim'd of him my only child—
As he disown'd the theft, he smil'd!
That very calm and callous look,
That fiendish sneer his visage took,
As when he said, in scornful mood,
There is a gallant in the wood!'—
I did not slay him as he stood—
All praise be to my Maker given!
Long sufrance is one path to heaven."

XXV.

Thus far the woeful tale was heard,
When something in the thicket stirr'd.
Up Redmond sprung; the villain Guy,
(For he it was that lurk'd so nigh,)
Drew back—he durst not cross his steel
A moment's space with brave O'Neale,
For all the treasured gold that rests
In Mortham's iron-banded chests.
Redmond resumed his seat;—he said,
Some roe was rustling in the shade.
Bertram laugh'd grimly when he saw
His timorous comrade backward draw.
"A trusty mate art thou, to fear
A single arm, and aid so near!
Yet have I seen thee mark a deer.
Give me thy carabine—I'll show
An art that thou wilt gladly know,
How thou mayst safely quell a foe."

XXVI.

On hands and knees fierce Bertram drew
The spreading birch and hazels through,
Till he had Redmond full in view;
The gun he levell'd—Mark like this
Was Bertram never known to miss,
When fair opposed to aim there sate
An object of his mortal hate.
That day young Redmond's death had seen,
But twice Matilda came between

The carbine and Redmond's breast,
 Just ere the spring his finger press'd.
 A deadly oath the ruffian swore,
 But yet his fell design forbore :
 " It ne'er," he mutter'd, " shall be said,
 That thus I scath'd thee, haughty maid,
 Then moved to seek more open aim,
 When to his side Guy Denzil came :
 " Bertram, forbear !—we are undone
 For ever, if thou fire the gun.
 By all the fiends, an armed force
 Descends the dell, of foot and horse !
 We perish if they hear a shot—
 Madman ! we have a safer plot—
 Nay, friend, be ruled, and bear thee back !
 Behold, down yonder hollow track,
 The warlike leader of the band
 Comes, with his broadsword in his hand.
 Bertram look'd up ; he saw, he knew
 That Denzil's fears had counsell'd true,
 Then cursed his fortune and withdrew,
 Threaded the woodlands undescried,
 And gain'd the cave on Greta side.

XXVII.

They whom dark Bertram in his wrath,
 Doom'd to captivity or death,
 Their thoughts to one sad subject lent,
 Saw not nor heard the ambushment.
 Heedless and unconcern'd they sate,
 While on the very verge of fate ;
 Heedless and unconcern'd remain'd,
 When Heaven the murderer's arm restrain'd,
 As ships drift darkling down the tide,
 Nor see the shelves o'er which they glide.
 Uninterrupted thus they heard
 What Mortham's closing tale declared.
 He spoke of wealth as of a load,
 By fortune on a wretch bestow'd,
 In bitter mockery of hate,
 His cureless woes to aggravate ;
 But yet he pray'd Matilda's care
 Might save that treasure for his heir—
 His Edith's son—for still he raved
 As confident his life was saved ;
 In frequent vision, he averr'd,
 He saw his face, his voice he heard ;
 Then argued calm—had murder been,
 The blood, the corpses, had been seen ;
 Some had pretended, too, to mark
 On Windermere a stranger bark,
 Whose crew, with jealous care, yet mild,
 Guarded a female and a child.
 While these faint proofs he told and press'd,
 Hope seem'd to kindle in his breast ;

Though inconsistent, vague, and vain,
It warp'd his judgment and his brain.

XXVIII.

These solemn words his story close :—
“Heaven witness for me, that I chose
My part in this sad civil fight,
Moved by no cause but England's right.
My country's groans have bid me draw
My sword for gospel and for law ;—
These righted, I fling arms aside,
And seek my son through Europe wide.
My wealth, on which a kinsman nigh
Already casts a grasping eye,
With thee may unsuspected lie.
When of my death Matilda hears,
Let her retain her trust three years ;
If none, from me, the treasure claim,
Perish'd is Mortham's race and name.
Then let it leave her generous hand,
And flow in bounty o'er the land ;
Soften the wounded prisoner's lot,
Rebuild the peasant's ruin'd cot ;
So spoils, acquired by fight afar,
Shall mitigate domestic war.”

XXIX.

The generous youths, who well had known
Of Mortham's mind the powerful tone,
To that high mind, by sorrow swerved,
Gave sympathy his woes deserved ;
But Wilfrid chief, who saw reveal'd
Why Mortham wish'd his life conceal'd,
In secret, doubtless, to pursue
The schemes his wilder'd fancy drew.
Thoughtful he heard Matilda tell
That she would share her father's cell,
His partner of captivity,
Where'er his prison-house should be ;
Yet grieved to think that Rokeby-hall
Dismantled, and forsook by all,
Open to rapine and to stealth,
Had now no safeguard for the wealth
Intrusted by her kinsman kind,
And for such noble use design'd.
“Was Barnard Castle then her choice,”
Wilfrid enquired with hasty voice,
“Since there the victor's laws ordain,
Her father must a space remain ?”
A flutter'd hope his accent shook,
A flutter'd joy was in his look.
Matilda hasten'd to reply,
For anger flash'd in Redmond's eye :—
“Duty,” she said, with gentle grace,
“Kind Wilfrid, has no choice of place :

Else had I for my sire assign'd
 Prison less galling to his mind,
 Than that his wild-wood haunts which sees,
 And hears the murmur of the Tees,
 Recalling thus, with every glance,
 What captive's sorrow can enhance;
 But where those woes are highest, there
 Needs Rokeby most his daughter's care."

XXX.

He felt the kindly check she gave,
 And stood abash'd—then answer'd grave:—
 "I sought thy purpose, noble maid,
 Thy doubts to clear, thy schemes to aid.
 I have beneath mine own command,
 So wills my sire, a gallant band,
 And well could send some horsemen wight
 To bear the treasure forth by night,
 And so bestow it as you deem
 In these ill days may safest seem."—
 "Thanks, gentle Wilfrid, thanks," she said:
 "O, be it not one day delay'd!
 And, more thy sister-friend to aid,
 Be thou thyself content to hold,
 In thine own keeping, Mortham's gold,
 Safest with thee."—While thus she spoke,
 Arm'd soldiers on their converse broke,
 The same of whose approach afraid,
 The ruffians left their ambuscade.
 Their chief to Wilfrid bended low,
 Then look'd around as for a foe.
 "What mean'st thou, friend," young Wycliffe said,
 "Why thus in arms beset the glade?"—
 "That would I gladly learn from you;
 For up my squadron as I drew,
 To exercise our martial game
 Upon the moor of Barningham,
 A stranger told you were waylaid,
 Surrounded, and to death betray'd.
 He had a leader's voice, I ween,
 A falcon glance, a warrior's mien.
 He bade me bring you instant aid;
 I doubted not, and I obey'd."

XXXI.

Wilfrid changed colour, and, amazed,
 Turn'd short, and on the speaker gazed;
 While Redmond every thicket round
 Track'd earnest as a questing hound,
 And Denzil's carabine he found;
 Sure evidence, by which they knew
 The warning was as kind as true.
 Wisest it seem'd, with cautious speed
 To leave the dell. It was agreed.

That Redmond, with Matilda fair,
And fitting guard, should home repair;
At nightfall Wilfrid should attend,
With a strong band, his sister-friend,
To bear with her from Rokeby's bowers
To Barnard Castle's lofty towers,
Secret and safe the banded chests,
In which the wealth of Mortham rests.
This hasty purpose fix'd, they part,
Each with a grieved and anxious heart.

CANTO FIFTH.

I.

THE sultry summer day is done.
The western hills have hid the sun,
But mountain peak and village spire
Retain reflection of his fire.
Old Barnard's towers are purple still,
To those that gaze from Toller-hill;
Distant and high, the tower of Bowes
Like steel upon the anvil glows;
And Stanmore's ridge, behind that lay,
Rich with the spoils of parting day,
In crimson and in gold array'd,
Streaks yet a while the closing shade,
Then slow resigns to darkening heaven
The tints which brighter hours had given.
Thus aged men, full loath and slow,
The vanities of life forego,
And count their youthful follies o'er,
Till memory lends her light no more.

II.

The eve, that slow on upland fades,
Has darker closed on Rokeby's glades,
Where, sunk within their banks profound,
Her guardian streams to meeting wound.
The stately oaks, whose sombre frown
Of noontide made a twilight brown,
Impervious now to fainter light,
Of twilight make an early night.
Hoarse into middle air arose
The vespers of the roosting crows,
And with congenial murmurs seem
To wake the Genii of the stream;
For louder clamour'd Greta's tide,
And Tees in deeper voice replied,

And fitful waked the evening wind,
Fitful in sighs its breath resign'd.
Wilfrid, whose fancy-nurtured soul
Felt in the scene a soft control,
With lighter footstep press'd the ground,
And often paused to look around ;
And, though his path was to his love,
Could not but linger in the grove,
To drink the thrilling interest dear,
Of awful pleasure check'd by fear.
Such inconsistent moods have we,
Even when our passions strike the key.

III.

Now, through the wood's dark mazes past,
The opening lawn he reach'd at last,
Where, silver'd by the moonlight ray,
The ancient Hall before him lay.
Those martial terrors long were fled,
That frown'd of old around its head :
The battlements, the turrets grey,
Seem'd half abandon'd to decay ;⁴⁰
On Barbican and keep of stone
Stern time the foeman's work had done.
Where banners the invader braved,
The harebell now and wallflower waved ;
In the rude guard-room, where of yore
Their weary hours the warders wore,
Now, while the cheerful fagots blaze,
On the paved floor the spindle plays ;
The flanking guns dismounted lie,
The moat is ruinous and dry,
The grim portcullis gone—and all
The fortress turn'd to peaceful Hall.

IV.

But yet precautions, lately ta'en,
Show'd danger's day revived again ;
The court-yard wall show'd marks of care,
The fall'n defences to repair,
Lending such strength as might withstand
The insult of marauding band.
The beams once more were taught to bear
The trembling drawbridge into air,
And not, till question'd o'er and o'er,
For Wilfrid oped the jealous door,
And when he entered, bolt and bar
Resumed their place with sullen jar ;
Then, as he cross'd the vaulted porch,
The old grey porter raised his torch,
And view'd him o'er, from foot to head,
Ere to the hall his steps he led.
That huge old hall, of knightly state,
Dismantled seem'd and desolate.

The moon through transom-shafts of stone,
 Which cross'd the latticed oriels, shone,
 And by the mournful light she gave,
 The Gothic vault seem'd funeral cave.
 Pennon and banner waved no more
 O'er beams of stag and tusks of boar,
 Nor glimmering arms were marshall'd seen,
 To glance those silvan spoils between.
 Those arms, those ensigns, borne away,
 Accomplish'd Rokeby's brave array,
 But all were lost on Marston's day!
 Yet here and there the moonbeams fall
 Where armour yet adorns the wall,
 Cumbrous of size, uncouth to sight,
 And useless in the modern fight!
 Like veteran relic of the wars,
 Known only by neglected scars.

V.

Matilda soon to greet him came,
 And bade them light the evening flame;
 Said, all for parting was prepared,
 And tarried but for Wilfrid's guard.
 But then, reluctant to unfold
 His father's avarice of gold,
 He hinted, that lest jealous eye
 Should on their precious burden pry,
 He judg'd it best the castle gate
 To enter when the night wore late;
 And therefore he had left command
 With those he trusted of his band,
 That they should be at Rokeby met,
 What time the midnight-watch was set.
 Now Redmond came, whose anxious care
 Till then was busied to prepare
 All needful, meetly to arrange
 The mansion for its mournful change.
 With Wilfrid's care and kindness pleas'd,
 His cold unready hand he seized,
 And press'd it, till his kindly strain
 The gentle youth return'd again.
 Seem'd as between them this was said,—
 "A while let jealousy be dead;
 And let our contest be, whose care
 Shall best assist this helpless fair."

VI.

There was no speech the truce to bind,
 It was a compact of the mind,—
 A generous thought, at once impress'd
 On either rival's generous breast.
 Matilda well the secret took,
 From sudden change of mien and look;
 And—for not small had been her fear
 Of jealous ire and danger near—

Felt, even in her dejected state,
 A joy beyond the reach of fate.
 They closed beside the chimney's blaze,
 And talk'd, and hoped for happier days,
 And lent their spirits' rising glow
 A while to gild impending woe;—
 High privilege of youthful time,
 Worth all the pleasures of our prime!
 The bickering fagot sparkled bright,
 And gave the scene of love to sight,
 Bade Wilfrid's cheek more lively glow,
 Play'd on Matilda's neck of snow,
 Her nut-brown curls and forehead high,
 And laugh'd in Redmond's azure eye.
 Two lovers by the maiden sate,
 Without a glance of jealous hate;
 The maid her lovers sat between,
 With open brow and equal mien:
 It is a sight but rarely spied,—
 Thanks to man's wrath and woman's pride.

VII.

While thus in peaceful guise they sate,
 A knock alarm'd the outer gate,
 And ere the tardy porter stirr'd,
 The tinkling of a harp was heard.
 A manly voice of mellow swell,
 Bore burden to the music well:—

Song.

"Summer eve is gone and past,
 Summer dew is falling fast;
 I have wander'd all the day,
 Do not bid me farther stray!
 Gentle hearts, of gentle kin,
 Take the wandering harper in!"

But the stern porter answer gave,
 With "Get thee hence, thou strolling knave!
 The king wants soldiers; war, I trow,
 Were meeter trade for such as thou."
 At this unkind reproof, again
 Answer'd the ready Minstrel's strain:—

Song resumed.

"Bid not me in battle-field,
 Buckler lift, or broadsword wield!
 All my strength and all my art
 Is to touch the gentle heart,
 With the wizard notes that ring
 From the peaceful minstrel string."—

The porter, all unmoved, replied,—
 "Depart in peace, with Heaven to guide;
 If longer by the gate thou dwell,
 Trust me, thou shalt not part so well."

VIII.

With somewhat of appealing look,
 The harper's part young Wilfrid took :
 " These notes so wild and ready thrill,
 They show no vulgar minstrel's skill ;
 Hard were his task to seek a home
 More distant, since the night is come ;
 And for his faith I dare engage—
 Your Harpool's blood is sour'd by age ;
 His gate, once readily display'd,
 To greet the friend, the poor to aid,
 Now even to me, though known of old,
 Did but reluctantly unfold."—
 " O blame not, as poor Harpool's crime,
 An evil of this evil time.
 He deems dependent on his care
 The safety of his patron's heir,
 Nor judges meet to ope the tower
 To guest unknown at parting hour,
 Urging his duty to excess
 Of rough and stubborn faithfulness.
 For this poor harper, I would fain
 He may relax :—Hark to his strain !"—

IX.

Song resumed.

" I have song of war for knight,
 Lay of love for lady bright,
 Fairy tale to lull the heir,
 Goblin grim the maids to scare.
 Dark the night, and long till day,
 Do not bid me further stray !
 " Rokeby's lords of martial fame,
 I can count them name by name ;
 Legends of their line there be,
 Known to few, but known to me ;
 If you honour Rokeby's kin,
 Take the wandering harper in !
 " Rokeby's lords had fair regard
 For the harp, and for the bard ;
 Baron's race throve never well,
 Where the curse of minstrel fell.
 If you love that noble kin,
 Take the weary harper in !"—
 " Hark ! Harpool parleys—there is hope,"
 Said Redmond, " that the gate will ope."—
 —" For all thy brag and boast, I trow,
 Nought know'st thou of the Felon Sow,"
 Quoth Harpool, " nor how Greta-side
 She roam'd, and Rokeby forest wide ;

Nor how Ralph Rokeby gave the beast
 To Richmond's friars to make a feast.
 Of Gilbert Griffinson the tale
 Goes, and of gallant Peter Dale,
 That well could strike with sword amain,
 And of the valiant son of Spain,
 Friar Middleton, and blithe Sir Ralph;
 There were a jest to make us laugh!
 If thou canst tell it, in yon shed
 Thou'st won thy supper and thy bed."

X.

Matilda smiled: "Cold hope," said she,
 "From Harpool's love of minstrelsy!
 But, for this harper, may we dare,
 Redmond, to mend his couch and fare?"—
 O, ask me not!—At minstrel-string
 My heart from infancy would spring;
 Nor can I hear its simplest strain,
 But it brings Erin's dream again,
 When placed by Owen Lysagh's knee,
 (The Fílea of O'Neale was he,⁴¹
 A blind and bearded man, whose eld
 Was sacred as a prophet's held,
 I've seen a ring of rugged kerne,
 With aspects shaggy, wild, and stern,
 Enchanted by the master's lay,
 Linger around the livelong day,
 Shift from wild rage to wilder glee,
 To love to grief to ecstasy,
 And feel each varied change of soul
 Obedient to the bard's control.—
 Ah, Clandeboy! thy friendly floor
 Slieve-Donard's oak shall light no more;⁴²
 Nor Owen's harp, beside the blaze,
 Tell maiden's love or hero's praise!
 The mantling brambles hide thy hearth,
 Centre of hospitable mirth;
 All undistinguish'd in the glade,
 My sires' glad home is prostrate laid,
 Their vassals wander wide and far,
 Serve foreign lords in distant war,
 And now the stranger's sons enjoy
 The lovely woods of Clandeboy!⁴³
 He spoke, and proudly turn'd aside,
 The starting tear to dry and hide.

XI.

Matilda's dark and soften'd eye
 Was glistening ere O'Neale's was dry.
 Her hand upon his arm she laid,—
 "It is the will of heaven," she said.
 "And think'st thou, Redmond, I can part
 From this loved home with lightsome heart,

Leaving to wild neglect whate'er
Even from my infancy was dear ?
For in this calm domestic bound
Were all Matilda's pleasures found.
That hearth, my sire was wont to grace,
Full soon may be a stranger's place ;
This hall, in which a child I play'd,
Like thine, dear Redmond, lowly laid,
The bramble and the thorn may braid ;
Or, pass'd for aye from me and mine,
It ne'er may shelter Rokeby's line.
Yet is this consolation given
My Redmond,—'t is the will of heaven.
Her word, her action, and her phrase,
Were kindly as in early days ;
For cold reserve had lost its power,
In sorrows sympathetic hour.
Young Redmond dared not trust his voice ;
But rather had it been his choice
To share that melancholy hour,
Than, arm'd with all a chieftain's power,
In full possession to enjoy
Slieve-Donard wide, and Clandeboy.

XII.

The blood left Wilfrid's ashen cheek
Matilda sees, and hastes to speak.—
"Happy in friendship's ready aid,
Let all my murmurs here be staid !
And Rokeby's maiden will not part
From Rokeby's hall with moody heart.
This night at least, for Rokeby's fame,
The hospitable hearth shall flame,
And, ere its native heir retire,
Find for the wanderer rest and fire,
While this poor harper, by the blaze,
Recounts the tale of other days.
Bid Harpool ope the door with speed,
Admit him, and relieve each need.—
Meantime, kind Wycliffe, wilt thou try
Thy minstrel skill ?—Nay, no reply—
And look not sad !—I guess thy thought,
Thy verse with laurels would be bought ;
And poor Matilda, landless now,
Has not a garland for thy brow.
True, I must leave sweet Rokeby's glades,
Nor wander more in Greta shades ;
But sure, no rigid jailer, thou
Wilt a short prison-walk allow,
Where summer flowers grow wild at will,
On Marwood-chase and Toller Hill ;⁴³
Then holly green and lily gay
Shall twine in guerdon of thy lay."
The mournful youth, a space aside,
To tune Matilda's harp applied ;

And then a low sad descant rung,
As prelude to the lay he sung,

XIII.

The Cypress Wreath.

O, Lady, twine no wreath for me,
Or twine it of the cypress-tree !
Too lively glow the lilies light,
The varnish'd holly's all too bright,
The May-flower and the eglantine
May shade a brow less sad than mine ;
But, Lady, weave no wreath for me,
Or weave it of the cypress-tree !

Let dimpled Mirth his temples twine
With tendrils of the laughing vine ;
The manly oak, the pensive yew,
To patriot and to sage be due ;
The myrtle bough bids lovers live,
But that Matilda will not give ;
Then, Lady, twine no wreath for me,
Or twine it of the cypress-tree !

Let merry England proudly rear
Her blended roses, bought so dear ;
Let Albin bind her bonnet blue
With heath and harebell dipp'd in dew
On favour'd Erin's crest be seen
The flower she loves of emerald green—
But, Lady, twine no wreath for me,
Or twine it of the cypress-tree.

Strike the wild harp, while maids prepare
The ivy meet for minstrel's hair ;
And, while his crown of laurel-leaves,
With bloody hand the victor weaves,
Let the loud trump his triumph tell ;
But when you hear the passing-bell,
Then, Lady, twine a wreath for me,
And twine it of the cypress-tree.

Yes ! twine for me the cypress bough :
But, O Matilda, twine not now !
Stay till a few brief months are past,
And I have look'd and loved my last !
When villagers my shroud bestrew
With panzies, rosemary, and rue,—
Then, Lady, weave a wreath for me,
And weave it of the cypress-tree.

XIV.

O'Neale observed the starting tear,
And spoke with kind and blithesome cheer—

"No, noble Wilfrid! ere the day
When mourns the land thy silent lay,
Shall many a wreath be freely wove
By hand of friendship and of love.
I would not wish that rigid Fate
Had doomed thee to a captive's state,
Whose hands are bound by honour's law,
Who wears a sword he must not draw:
But were it so, in minstrel pride
The land together would we ride,
On prancing steeds, like harpers old,
Bound for the halls of barons bold;
Each lover of the lyre we'd seek,
From Michael's Mount to Skiddaw's Peak,
Survey wild Albin's mountain strand,
And roam green Erin's lovely land;
While thou the gentler souls should move,
With lay of pity and of love,
And I, thy mate, in rougher strain,
Would sing of war and warriors slain:
Old England's bards were vanquish'd then,
And Scotland's vaunted Hawthornden,^a
And, silenced on Iernian shore,
M'Curtin's harp should charm no more!"
In lively mood he spoke, to wile
From Wilfrid's woe-worn cheek a smile.

XV.

"But," said Matilda, "ere thy name,
Good Redmond, gain its destined fame,
Say, wilt thou kindly deign to call
Thy brother-minstrel to the hall?
Bid all the household, too, attend,
Each in his rank a humble friend;
I know their faithful hearts will grieve,
When their poor Mistress takes her leave;
So let the horn and beaker flow
To mitigate their parting woe."
The harper came;—in youth's first prime
Himself; in mode of olden time
His garb was fashion'd, to express
The ancient English minstrel's dress,⁴⁴
A seemly gown of Kendal green,
With gorget closed of silver sheen;
His harp in silken scarf was slung,
And by his side an anlace hung.
It seem'd some masquer's quaint array,
For revel or for holiday.

XVI.

He made obeisance with a free
Yet studied air of courtesy.

^a Drummond of Hawthornden was in the zenith of his reputation as poet during the Civil Wars. He died in 1649.

Each look and accent, framed to please,
 Seem'd to affect a playful ease;
 His face was of that doubtful kind,
 That wins the eye, but not the mind;
 Yet harsh it seem'd to deem amiss
 Of brow so young and smooth as this.
 His was the subtle look and sly,
 That, spying all, seems nought to spy;
 Round all the group his glances stole,
 Unmark'd themselves, to mark the whole.
 Yet sunk beneath Matilda's look,
 Nor could the eye of Redmond brook.
 To the suspicious, or the old,
 Subtle and dangerous and bold
 Had seem'd this self-invited guest;
 But young our lovers,—and the rest,
 Wrapt in their sorrow and their fear
 At parting of their Mistress dear,
 Tear-blinded, to the Castle-hall,
 Came as to bear her funeral pall.

XVII.

All that expression base was gone,
 When waked the guest his minstrel tone
 It fled at inspiration's call,
 As erst the demon fled from Saul.^a
 More noble glance he cast around,
 More free-drawn breath inspired the sound,
 His pulse beat bolder and more high,
 In all the pride of minstrelsy!
 Alas! too soon that pride was o'er,
 Sunk with the lay that bade it soar!
 His soul resumed, with habit's chain,
 Its vices wild, and follies vain,
 And gave the talent, with him born,
 To be a common curse and scorn.
 Such was the youth whom Rokeby's Maid,
 With condescending kindness, pray'd
 Here to renew the strains she loved,
 At distance heard, and well approved.

XVIII.

Song

THE HARP.

I was a wild and wayward boy,
 My childhood scorn'd each childish toy;

^a "But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.

"And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring him to me. And it came to pass, that when the *evil* spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: So Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."—1 SAMUEL, chap. xvi. 14, 17, 23.

Retired from all, reserved and coy,
 To musing prone,
 I woo'd my solitary joy,
 My Harp alone.

My youth, with bold Ambition's mood,
 Despised the humble stream and wood,
 Where my poor father's cottage stood,
 To fame unknown;—
 What should my soaring views make good?
 My Harp alone!

Love came with all his frantic fire,
 And wild romance of vain desire:
 The baron's daughter heard my lyre,
 And praised the tone;—
 What could presumptuous hope inspire?
 My Harp alone!

At manhood's touch the bubble burst,
 And manhood's pride the vision curst,
 And all that had my folly nursed
 Love's sway to own;
 Yet spared the spell that lull'd me first,
 My Harp alone!

Woe came with war, and want with woe,
 And it was mine to undergo
 Each outrage of the rebel foe:—
 Can aught atone
 My fields laid waste, my cot laid low?
 My Harp alone!

Ambition's dream I've seen depart,
 Have rued of penury the smart,
 Have felt of love the venom'd dart,
 When hope was flown:
 Yet rests one solace to my heart,—
 My Harp alone!

Then over mountain, moor, and hill,
 My faithful Harp, I'll bear thee still;
 And when this life of want and ill
 Is wellnigh gone,
 Thy strings mine elegy shall thrill,
 My Harp alone!

XIX.

"A pleasing lay!" Matilda said;
 But Harpool shook his old grey head,
 And took his baton and his torch,
 To seek his guard-room in the porch.
 Edmund observed—with sudden change,
 Among the strings his fingers range,

Until they waked a bolder glee
 Of military melody;
 Then paused amid the martial sound,
 And look'd with well-feign'd fear around;—
 "None to this noble house belong,"
 He said, "that would a Minstrel wrong,
 Whose fate has been, through good and ill,
 To love his Royal Master still;
 And, with your honour'd leave, would fain
 Rejoice you with a loyal strain."
 Then, as assured by sign and look,
 The warlike tone again he took;
 And Harpool stopp'd, and turn'd to hear
 A ditty of the Cavalier.

XX.

SONG.

THE CAVALIER.

While the dawn on the mountain was misty and grey,
 My true love has mounted his steed, and away
 Over hill, over valley, o'er dale, and o'er down,—
 Heaven shield the brave Gallant that fights for the Crown!

He has doff'd the silk doublet the breast-plate to bear,
 He has placed the steel-cap o'er his long-flowing hair,
 From his belt to his stirrup his broadsword hangs down,—
 Heaven shield the brave Gallant that fights for the Crown!

For the rights of fair England that broadsword he draws;
 Her King is his leader, her church is his cause;
 His watchword is honour, his pay is renown,—
 God strike with the Gallant that strikes for the Crown!

They may boast of their Fairfax, their Waller, and all
 The roundheaded rebels of Westminster Hall;
 But tell these bold traitors of London's proud town,
 That the spears of the North have encircled the Crown.

There's Derby and Cavendish, dread of their foes;
 There's Erin's high Ormond, and Scotland's Montrose!
 Would you match the base Skippon, and Massey, and Brown,
 With the Barons of England, that fight for the Crown?

Now joy to the crest of the brave Cavalier!
 Be his banner unconquer'd, resistless his spear,
 Till in peace and in triumph his toils he may drown,
 In a pledge to fair England, her Church, and her Crown.

XXI.

"Alas!" Matilda said, "that strain,
 Good Harper, now is heard in vain!
 The time has been, at such a sound,
 When Rokeby's vassals gather'd round,
 An hundred manly hearts would bound;

But now, the stirring verse we hear,
Like trump in dying soldier's ear !
Listless and sad the notes we own,
The power to answer them is flown.
Yet not without his meet applause
Be he that sings the rightful cause,
Even when the crisis of its fate
To human eye seems desperate.
While Rokeby's Heir such power retains,
Let this slight guerdon pay thy pains :—
And, lend thy harp ; I fain would try
If my poor skill can aught supply,
Ere yet I leave my fathers' hall,
To mourn the cause in which we fall."

XXII.

The harper, with a downcast look,
And trembling hand, her bounty took.—
As yet, the conscious pride of art
Had steel'd him in his treacherous part ;
A powerful spring, of force unguess'd,
That hath each gentler mood suppress'd,
And reign'd in many a human breast—
From his that plans the red campaign,
To his that wastes the woodland reign.
The failing wing, the blood-shot eye,—
The sportsman marks with apathy,
Each feeling of his victim's ill
Drown'd in his own successful skill.
The veteran, too, who now no more
Aspires to head the battle's roar,
Loves still the triumph of his art,
And traces on the pencill'd chart
Some stern invader's destined way,
Through blood and ruin, to his prey ;
Patriots to death, and towns to flame,
He dooms, to raise another's name,
And shares the guilt, though not the fame.
What pays him for his span of time
Spent in premeditating crime ?
What against pity arms his heart ?—
It is the conscious pride of art.

XXIII.

But principles in Edmund's mind
Were baseless, vague, and undefined.
His soul, like bark with rudder lost,
On Passion's changeable tide was tost ;
Nor Vice nor Virtue had the power
Beyond the impression of the hour ;
And, O ! when Passion rules, how rare
The hours that fall to Virtue's share !
Yet now she roused her—for the pride,
That lack of sterner guilt supplied,

Could scarce support him when arose
The lay that mourned Matilda's woes.

Sung.

THE FAREWELL.

The sound of Rokeby's woods I hear,
They mingle with the song :
Dark Greta's voice is in mine ear,
I must not hear them long.
From every loved and native haunt
The native Heir must stray,
And, like a ghost whom sunbeams daunt,
Must part before the day.

Soon from the halls my fathers rear'd,
Their scutcheons may descend,
A line so long beloved and fear'd
May soon obscurely end.
No longer here Matilda's tone
Shall bid those echoes swell ;
Yet shall they hear her proudly own
The cause in which we fell.

The Lady paused, and then again
Resumed the lay in loftier strain.—

XXIV.

Let our halls and towers decay,
Be our name and line forgot,
Lands and manors pass away,—
We but share our Monarch's lot.
If no more our annals show
Battles won and Banners taken,
Still in death, defeat, and woe,
Ours be loyalty unshaken !

Constant still in danger's hour,
Princes own'd our father's aid ;
Lands and honours, wealth and power,
Well their loyalty repaid.
Perish wealth, and power, and pride !
Mortal boons by mortals given ;
But let Constancy abide,—
Constancy's the gift of Heaven.

XXV.

While thus Matilda's lay was heard,
A thousand thoughts in Edmund stirr'd.
In peasant life he might have known
As fair a face, as sweet a tone ;
But village notes could ne'er supply
That rich and varied melody ;
And ne'er in cottage maid was seen
The easy dignity of mien,

Claiming respect, yet waving state,
That marks the daughters of the great.
Yet not, perchance, had these alone
His scheme of purposed guilt o'erthrown;
But while her energy of mind
Superior rose to griefs combined,
Lending its kindling to her eye,
Giving her form new majesty,—
To Edmund's thought Matilda seem'd
The very object he had dream'd;
When, long ere guilt his soul had known,
In Winston bowers he mused alone,
Taxing his fancy to combine
The face, the air, the voice divine,
Of princess fair, by cruel fate
Reft of her honours, power, and state,
Till to her rightful realm restored
By destined hero's conquering sword.

XXVI.

"Such was my vision!" Edmund thought;
"And have I, then, the ruin wrought
Of such a maid, that fancy ne'er
In fairest vision form'd her peer?
Was it my hand that could uncloset
The postern to her ruthless foes?
Foes, lost to honour, law, and faith—
Their kindest mercy sudden death!
Have I done this? I! who have sworn,
That if the globe such angel bore,
I would have traced its circle broad,
To kiss the ground on which she trod!—
And now—O! would that earth would give
And close upon me while alive!—
Is there no hope?—is all then lost?—
Bertram's already on his post!
Even now, beside the Hall's arch'd door,
I saw his shadow cross the floor!
He was to wait my signal strain—
A little respite thus we gain:
By what I heard the menials say,
Young Wycliffe's troop are on their way—
Alarm precipitates the crime!
My harp must wear away the time."—
And then, in accents faint and low,
He falter'd forth a tale of woe.—

XXVII.

Ballad.

"And whither would you lead me, then?"
Quoth the Friar of orders grey;
And the Ruffians twain replied again,
"By a dying woman to pray."—

"I see," he said, "a lovely sight,
A sight bodes little harm,
A lady as a lily bright,
With an infant on her arm."—

"Then do thine office, Friar grey,
And see thou shrive her free!
Else shall the sprite, that parts to-night,
Fling all its guilt on thee.

"Let mass be said, and trentals read,
When thou'rt to convent gone,
And bid the bell of St. Benedict
Toll out its deepest tone."

The shrift is done, the Friar is gone,
Blindfolded as he came—
Next morning, all in Littlecot Hall
Were weeping for their dame.

Wild Darrell is an alter'd man,
The village crones can tell;
He looks pale as clay, and strives to pray,
If he hears the convent bell.

If prince or peer cross Darrell's way,
He'll beard him in his pride—
If he meet a Friar of orders grey,
He droops and turns aside.

XXVIII.

"Harper! methinks thy magic lays,"
Matilda said, "can goblins raise!
Wellnigh my fancy can discern,
Near the dark porch a visage stern;
E'en now, in yonder shadowy nook,
I see it!—Redmond, Wilfrid, look!—
A human form distinct and clear—
God, for thy mercy!—It draws near!"
She saw too true. Stride after stride,
The centre of that chamber wide
Fierce Bertram gain'd; then made a stand,
And, proudly waving with his hand,
Thundered—"Be still, upon your lives!—
He bleeds who speaks, he dies who strives."
Behind their chief, the robber crew
Forth from the darken'd portal drew
In silence—save that echo dread
Return'd their heavy measured tread.
The lamp's uncertain lustre gave
Their arms to gleam, their plumes to wave;
File after file in order pass,
Like forms on Banquo's mystic glass.
Then, halting at their leader's sign,
At once they form'd and curv'd their line,

Hemming within its crescent drear
 Their victims, like a herd of deer.
 Another sign, and to the aim
 Levell'd at once their muskets came,
 As waiting but their chieftain's word,
 To make their fatal volley heard.

XXIX.

Back in a heap the menials drew;
 Yet, even in mortal terror, true,
 Their pale and startled group oppose
 Between Matilda and the foes.
 "O, haste thee, Wilfrid!" Redmond cried;
 "Undo that wicket by thy side!
 Bear hence Matilda—gain the wood—
 The pass may be a while made good—
 Thy band, ere this, must sure be nigh—
 O speak not—dally not—but fly!"
 While yet the crowd their motions hide,
 Through the low wicket door they glide.
 Through vaulted passages they wind,
 In Gothic intricacy twined;
 Wilfrid half led, and half he bore,
 Matilda to the postern door,
 And safe beneath the forest tree,
 The Lady stands at liberty.
 The moonbeams, the fresh gale's caress,
 Renew'd suspended consciousness;—
 "Where's Redmond?" eagerly she cries:
 "Thou answer'st not—he dies! he dies!
 And thou hast left him, all bereft
 Of mortal aid—with murderers left!
 I know it well—he would not yield
 His sword to man—his doom is seal'd!
 For my scorn'd life, which thou hast bought
 At price of his, I thank thee not."

XXX.

The unjust reproach, the angry look,
 The heart of Wilfrid could not brook.
 "Lady," he said, "my band so near,
 In safety thou mayst rest thee here.
 For Redmond's death thou shalt not mourn,
 If mine can buy his safe return."
 He turn'd away—his heart throbb'd high,
 The tear was bursting from his eye;
 The sense of her injustice press'd
 Upon the Maid's distracted breast,—
 "Stay, Wilfrid, stay! all aid is vain!"
 He heard, but turn'd him not again;
 He reaches now the postern-door,
 Now enters—and is seen no more.

XXXI.

With all the agony that e'er
 Was gender'd 'twixt suspense and fear.

She watch'd the line of windows tall,
 Whose Gothic lattice lights the Hall,
 Distinguish'd by the paly red
 The lamps in dim reflection shed,
 While all beside, in wan moonlight
 Each grated casement glimmer'd white.
 No sight of harm, no sound of ill,
 It is a deep and midnight still.
 Who look'd upon the scene, had guess'd
 All in the Castle were at rest—
 When sudden on the windows shone
 A lightning flash, just seen and gone!
 A shot is heard—Again the flame
 Flash'd thick and fast—a volley came!
 Then echo'd wildly, from within,
 Of shout and scream the mingled din,
 And weapon-clash, and maddening cry,
 Of those who kill, and those who die!—
 As fill'd the Hall with sulphurous smoke,
 More red, more dark, the death-flash broke;
 And forms were on the lattice cast,
 That struck, or struggled, as they past.

XXXII.

What sounds upon the midnight wind
 Approach so rapidly behind?
 It is—it is—the tramp of steeds,—
 Matilda hears the sound—she speeds,—
 Seizes upon the leader's rein—
 “O, haste to aid, ere aid be vain!
 Fly to the postern—gain the Hall!”
 From saddle spring the troopers all;
 Their gallant steeds, at liberty,
 Run wild along the moonlight lea.
 But, ere they burst upon the scene,
 Full stubborn had the conflict been.
 When Bertram mark'd Matilda's flight,
 It gave the signal for the fight;
 And Rokeby's veterans, seam'd with scars
 Of Scotland's and of Erin's wars,
 Their momentary panic o'er,
 Stood to the arms which then they bore;
 (For they were weapon'd, and prepared
 Their mistress on her way to guard.)
 Then cheer'd them to the fight O'Neale,
 Then pea'd the shot, and clash'd the steel;
 The war-smoke soon with sable breath
 Darken'd the scene of blood and death,
 While on the few defenders close
 The Bandits, with redoubled blows,
 And, twice driven back, yet fierce and fell
 Renew the charge with frantic yell.

XXXIII.

Wilfrid has fall'n—but o'er him stood
 Young Redmond, soil'd with smoke and blood.

Cheering his mates with heart and hand
Still to make good their desperate stand.—
“Up, comrades, up! In Rokeby halls
Ne’er be it said our courage falls.
What! faint ye for their savage cry,
Or do the smoke-wreaths daunt your eye?
These rafters have return’d a shout
As loud at Rokeby’s wassail rout,
As thick a smoke these hearths have given
At Hallow-tide or Christmas-even.
Stand to it yet! renew the fight,
For Rokeby’s and Matilda’s right!
These slaves! they dare not, hand to hand,
Bide buffet from a true man’s brand.”
Impetuous, active, fierce, and young,
Upon the advancing foes he sprung.
Woe to the wretch at whom is bent
His brandish’d falchion’s sheer descent!
Backward they scatter’d as he came,
Like wolves before the levin flame,
When, ’mid their howling conclave driven,
Hath glanced the thunderbolt of heaven.
Bertram rush’d on—But Harpool clasp’d
His knees although in death he gasp’d,
His falling corpse before him flung,
And round the trammell’d ruffian clung.
Just then the soldiers fill’d the dome,
And, shouting, charged the felons home
So fiercely, that, in panic dread,
They broke, they yielded, fell, or fled.
Bertram’s stern voice they heed no more,
Though heard above the battle’s roar;
While, trampling down the dying man,
He strove, with volley’d threat and ban,
In scorn of odds, in fate’s despite,
To rally up the desperate fight.

XXXIV.

Soon murkier clouds the Hall enfold,
Than e’er from battle-thunders roll’d
So dense, the combatants scarce know
To aim or to avoid the blow.
Smothering and blindfold grows the fight—
But soon shall dawn a dismal light!
Mid cries, and clashing arms, there came
The hollow sound of rushing flame;
New horrors on the tumult dire
Arise—the Castle is on fire!
Doubtful, if chance had cast the brand,
Or frantic Bertram’s desperate hand.
Matilda saw—for frequent broke
From the dim casements gusts of smoke,
Yon tower, which late so clear defined
On the fair hemisphere reclined,

That, pencill'd on its azure pure,
The eye could count each embrazure,
Now, swathed within the sweeping cloud,
Seems giant-spectre in his shroud;
Till, from each loop-hole flashing light,
A spout of fire shines ruddy bright,
And, gathering to united glare,
Streams high into the midnight air;
A dismal beacon, far and wide
That waken'd Greta's slumbering side.
Soon all beneath, through gallery long,
And pendant arch, the fire flash'd strong,
Snatching whatever could maintain,
Raise, or extend, its furious reign;
Startling, with closer cause of dread,
The females who the conflict fled,
And now rush'd forth upon the plain,
Filling the air with clamours vain.

XXXV.

But ceased not yet, the Hall within,
The shriek, the shout, the carnage-din,
Till bursting lattices give proof
The flames have caught the rafter'd roof.
What! wait they till its beams amain
Crash on the slayers and the slain?
The alarm is caught—the drawbridge falls,
The warriors hurry from the walls,
But, by the conflagration's light,
Upon the lawn renew the fight.
Each straggling felon down was hew'd,
Not one could gain the sheltering wood;
But forth the affrighted harper sprung,
And to Matilda's robe he clung.
Her shriek, entreaty, and command,
Stopp'd the pursuer's lifted hand.
Denzil and he alive were ta'en;
The rest, save Bertram, all are slain.

XXXVI.

And where is Bertram?—Soaring high,
The general flame ascends the sky;
In gather'd group the soldiers gaze
Upon the broad and roaring blaze,
When, like infernal demon, sent
Red from his penal element,
To plague and to pollute the air,—
His face all gore, on fire his hair,
Forth from the central mass of smoke
The giant form of Bertram broke!
His brandish'd sword on high he rears,
Then plunged among opposing spears;
Round his left arm his mantle truss'd,
Received and foil'd three lances' thrust.

Nor these his headlong course withstood,
Like reeds he snapp'd the tough ash-wood.
In vain his foes around him clung;
With matchless force aside he flung
Their boldest,—as the bull, at bay,
Tosses the ban-dogs from his way,
Through forty foes his path he made,
And safely gain'd the forest glade.

XXXVII.

Scarce was this final conflict o'er,
When from the postern Redmond bore
Wilfrid, who, as of life bereft,
Had in the fatal Hall been left,
Deserted there by all his train;
But Redmond saw, and turn'd again.—
Beneath an oak he laid him down,
That in the blaze gleam'd ruddy brown,
And then his mantle's clasp undid;
Matilda held his drooping head,
Till, given to breathe the freer air,
Returning life repaid their care.
He gazed on them with heavy sigh,—
“I could have wish'd even thus to die!”
No more he said—for now with speed
Each trooper had regain'd his steed;
The ready palfreys stood array'd,
For Redmond and for Rokeby's Maid;
Two Wilfrid on his horse sustain,
One leads his charger by the rein.
But oft Matilda look'd behind,
As up the Vale of Tees they wind,
Where far the mansion of her sires
Beacon'd the dale with midnight fires.
In gloomy arch above them spread,
The clouded heaven lower'd bloody red;
Beneath, in sombre light, the flood
Appear'd to roll in waves of blood.
Then, one by one, was heard to fall
The tower, the donjon-keep, the hall.
Each rushing down with thunder sound,
A space the conflagration drown'd;
Till, gathering strength, again it rose,
Announced its triumph in its close,
Shook wide its light the landscape o'er,
Then sunk—and Rokeby was no more!

CANTO SIXTH.

I.

THE summer sun, whose early power
 Was wont to gild Matilda's bower,
 And rouse her with his matin ray
 Her duteous orisons to pay,—
 That morning sun has three times seen
 The flowers unfold on Rokeby green,
 But sees no more the slumbers fly
 From fair Matilda's hazel eye;
 That morning sun has three times broke
 On Rokeby's glades of elm and oak,
 But, rising from their silvan screen,
 Marks no grey turrets glance between.
 A shapeless mass lie keep and tower,
 That, hissing to the morning shower,
 Can but with smouldering vapour pay
 The early smile of summer day.
 The peasant to his labour bound,
 Pauses to view the blacken'd mound,
 Striving, amid the ruin'd space,
 Each well-remember'd spot to trace.
 That length of frail and fire-scorch'd wall
 Once screen'd the hospitable hall:
 When yonder broken arch was whole,
 'Twas there was dealt the weekly dole;
 And where yon tottering columns nod,
 The chapel sent the hymn to God.—
 So fits the world's uncertain span!
 Nor zeal for God, nor love for man,
 Gives mortal monuments a date
 Beyond the power of Time and Fate.
 The towers must share the builder's doom:
 Ruin is theirs, and his a tomb:
 But better boon benignant Heaven
 To Faith and Charity has given,
 And bids the Christian hope sublime
 Transcend the bounds of Fate and Time.

II.

Now the third night of summer came,
 Since that which witness'd Rokeby's flame.
 On Brignall cliffs and Scargill brake
 The cwlet's homilies awake,
 The bittern scream'd from rush and flag,
 The raven slumber'd on his crag,
 Forth from his den the otter drew,—
 Grayling and trout their tyrant knew,

As between reed and sedge he peers,
 With fierce round snout and sharpen'd ears,
 Or, prowling by the moonbeam cool,
 Watches the stream or swims the pool;—
 Perch'd on his wonted eyrie high,
 Sleep seal'd the tercelet's wearied eye,
 That all the day had watch'd so well
 The cushat dart across the dell.
 In dubious beam reflected shone
 That lofty cliff of pale grey stone,
 Beside whose base the secret cave
 'To rapine late a refuge gave.
 The crag's wild crest of copse and yew
 On Greta's breast dark shadows threw;
 Shadows that met or shunn'd the sight,
 With every change of fitful light;
 As hope and fear alternate chase
 Our course through life's uncertain race.

III.

Gliding by crag and copsewood green,
 A solitary form was seen
 To trace with stealthy pace the wold,
 Like fox that seeks the midnight fold,
 And pauses oft, and cowers dismay'd,
 At every breath that stirs the shade.
 He passes now the ivy bush,—
 The owl has seen him, and is hush;
 He passes now the dodder'd oak,—
 Ye heard the startled raven croak;
 Lower and lower he descends,
 Rustle the leaves, the brushwood bends;
 The otter hears him tread the shore,
 And dives, and is beheld no more;
 And by the cliff of pale grey stone
 The midnight wanderer stands alone.
 Methinks, that by the moon we trace
 A well-remember'd form and face!
 That stripling shape, that cheek so pale,
 Combine to tell a rueful tale,
 Of powers misused, of passion's force,
 Of guilt, of grief, and of remorse!
 'Tis Edmund's eye, at every sound
 That flings that guilty glance around;
 'Tis Edmund's trembling haste divides
 The brushwood that the cavern hides;
 And, when its narrow porch lies bare,
 'Tis Edmund's form that enters there

IV.

His flint and steel have sparkled bright,
 A lamp hath lent the cavern light.
 Fearful and quick his eye surveys
 Each angle of the gloomy maze.

Since last he left that stern abode,
 It seem'd as none its floor had trode;
 Untouch'd appear'd the various spoil,
 The purchase of his comrades' toil;
 Masks and disguises grim'd with mud,
 Arms broken and defiled with blood,
 And all the nameless tools that aid
 Night-felons in their lawless trade,
 Upon the gloomy walls were hung,
 Or lay in nooks obscurely flung.
 Still on the sordid board appear
 The relics of the noontide cheer:
 Flagons and emptied flasks were there,
 And bench o'erthrown, and shatter'd chair;
 And all around the semblance show'd,
 As when the final revel glow'd,
 When the red sun was setting fast,
 And parting pledge Guy Denzil past.
 "To Rokeby treasure-vaults!" they quaff'd,
 And shouted loud and wildly laugh'd,
 Pour'd maddening from the rocky door,
 And parted—to return no more!
 They found in Rokeby vaults their doom,—
 A bloody death, a burning tomb!

V.

There his own peasant dress he spies,
 Doff'd to assume that quaint disguise;
 And, shuddering, thought upon his glee,
 When prank'd in garb of minstrelsy.
 "O, be the fatal art accurst,"
 He cried, "that moved my folly first;
 Till, bribed by bandits' base applause,
 I burst through God's and Nature's laws!
 Three summer days are scanty past
 Since I have trod this cavern last,
 A thoughtless wretch, and prompt to err—
 But, O, as yet no murderer!
 Even now I list my comrades' cheer,
 That general laugh is in mine ear,
 Which raised my pulse and steel'd my heart,
 As I rehearsed my treacherous part—
 And would that all since then could seem
 The phantom of a fever's dream!
 But fatal Memory notes too well
 The horrors of the dying yell
 From my despairing mates that broke,
 When flash'd the fire and roll'd the smoke;
 When the avengers shouting came,
 And hemm'd us 'twixt the sword and flame!
 My frantic flight,—the lifted brand,—
 That angel's interposing hand!—
 If, for my life from slaughter freed,
 I yet could pay some grateful meed!
 Perchance this object of my quest
 May aid"—he turn'd, nor spoke the rest.

VI.

Due northward from the rugged hearth,
 With paces five he metes the earth,
 Then toil'd with mattock to explore
 The entrails of the cavern floor,
 Nor paused till, deep beneath the ground,
 His search a small steel casket found.
 Just as he stoop'd to loose its hasp
 His shoulder felt a giant grasp;
 He started, and look'd up aghast,
 Then shriek'd!—"T was Bertram held him fast.
 "Fear not!" he said; but who could hear
 That deep stern voice, and cease to fear?
 "Fear not!—By heaven! he shakes as much
 As partridge in the falcon's clutch:"—
 He raised him, and unloosed his hold,
 While from the opening casket roll'd
 A chain and reliquaire of gold.
 Bertram beheld it with surprise,
 Gazed on its fashion and device,
 Then, cheering Edmund as he could,
 Somewhat he smooth'd his rugged mood:
 For still the youth's half-lifted eye
 Quiver'd with terror's agony,
 And sidelong glanced, as to explore,
 In meditated flight, the door.
 "Sit," Bertram said, "from danger free:
 Thou canst not, and thou shalt not, flee.
 Chance brings me hither! hill and plain
 I've sought for refuge-place in vain.
 And tell me now, thou aguish boy,
 What maketh thou here? what means this toy?
 Denzil and thou, I mark'd, were ta'en;
 What lucky chance unbound your chain?
 I deem'd, long since on Balio's tower,
 Your heads were warp'd with sun and shower.
 Tell me the whole—and, mark! nought e'er
 Chafes me like falsehood, or like fear."
 Gathering his courage to his aid,
 But trembling still, the youth obey'd.

VII.

"Denzil and I two nights pass'd o'er
 In fetters on the dungeon floor.
 A guest the third sad morrow brought—
 Our hold, dark Oswald Wycliffe sought,
 And eyed my comrade long askance,
 With fix'd and penetrating glance.
 "Guy Denzil art thou call'd?"—"The same.
 At Court who served wild Buckingham;
 Thence banish'd, won a keeper's place,
 So Villiers will'd, in Marwood-chase;
 That lost—I need not tell thee why—
 Thou madest thy wit thy wants supply,

Then fought for Rokeby:—Have I guess'd
 My prisoner right?"—"At thy behest."—
 He paused a while, and then went on
 With low and confidential tone;—
 Me, as I judge, not then he saw,
 Close nestled in my couch of straw.—
 'List to me, Guy. Thou know'st the great
 Have frequent need of what they hate;
 Hence, in their favour oft we see
 Unscrupled, useful men like thee.
 Were I disposed to bid thee live,
 What pledge of faith hast thou to give?"

VIII.

"The ready Fiend, who never yet
 Hath failed to sharpen Denzil's wit,
 Prompted his lie—"His only child
 Should rest his pledge,"—The Baron smiled,
 And turn'd to me—"Thou art his son?"
 I bowed—our fetters were undone,
 And we were led to hear apart
 A dreadful lesson of his art.
 Wilfrid, he said, his heir and son,
 Had fair Matilda's favour won;
 And long since had their union been,
 But for her father's bigot spleen,
 Whose brute and blind-fold party-rage
 Would, force per force, her hand engage
 To a base kern of Irish earth,
 Unknown his lineage and his birth,
 Save that a dying ruffian bore
 The infant brat to Rokeby door.
 Gentle restraint, he said, would lead
 Old Rokeby to enlarge his creed;
 But fair occasion he must find
 For such restraint, well meant and kind,
 The Knight being render'd to his charge
 But as a prisoner at large.

IX.

"He school'd us in a well-forged tale,
 Of scheme the Castle walls to scale,
 To which was leagued each Cavalier
 That dwells upon the Tyne and Wear;
 That Rokeby, his parole forgot,
 Had dealt with us to aid the plot.
 Such was the charge, which Denzil's zeal
 Of hate to Rokeby and O'Neale
 Proffer'd, as witness, to make good,
 Even though the forfeit were their blood.
 I scrupled, until o'er and o'er
 His prisoners' safety Wycliffe swore;
 And then—alas! what needs there more?
 I knew I should not live to say
 The proffer I refused that day;

Ashamed to live, yet loth to die,
 I soil'd me with their infamy!"—
 "Poor youth!" said Bertram, "wavering still,
 Unfit alike for good or ill!
 But what fell next?"—"Soon as at large
 Was scroll'd and sign'd our fatal charge,
 There never yet, on tragic stage,
 Was seen so well a painted rage
 As Oswald's show'd! With loud alarm
 He call'd his garrison to arm;
 From tower to tower, from post to post,
 He hurried as if all were lost;
 Consign'd to dungeon and to chain
 The good old Knight and all his train;
 Warn'd each suspected Cavalier,
 Within his limits, to appear
 To-morrow, at the hour of noon,
 In the high church of Eglistone."

X.

"Of Eglistone!—Even now I pass'd,"
 Said Bertram, "as the night closed fast;
 Torches and cressets gleam'd around,
 I heard the saw and hammer sound,
 And I could mark they toil'd to raise
 A scaffold, hung with sable baize,
 Which the grim headsman's scene display'd,
 Block, axe, and sawdust ready laid.
 Some evil deed will there be done,
 Unless Matilda wed his son;—
 She loves him not—'tis shrewdly guess'd
 That Redmond rules the damsel's breast.
 This is a turn of Oswald's skill;
 But I may meet, and foil him still!—
 How camest thou to thy freedom?"—"There
 Lies mystery more dark and rare.
 In midst of Wycliffe's well-feign'd rage,
 A scroll was offer'd by a page,
 Who told, a muffled horseman late
 Had left it at the Castle-gate.
 He broke the seal—his cheek show'd change.
 Sudden, portentous, wild, and strange;
 The mimic passion of his eye
 Was turn'd to actual agony;
 His hand like summer sapling shook,
 Terror and guilt were in his look.
 Denzil he judged, in time of need,
 Fit counsellor for evil deed;
 And thus apart his counsel broke,
 While with a ghastly smile he spoke:—

XI.

"As in the pageants of the stage,
 The dead awake in this wild age,

Mortham—whom all men deem'd decreed
 In his own deadly snare to bleed,
 Slain by a bravo, whom, o'er sea,
 He train'd to aid in murdering me,—
 Mortham has 'scaped!—the coward shot
 The steed, but harm'd the rider not.'"
 Here, with an execration fell,
 Bertram leap'd up, and paced the cell:—
 "Thine own grey head, or bosom dark,"
 He mutter'd, "may be surer mark!"
 Then sat, and sign'd to Edmund, pale
 With terror, to resume his tale.
 "Wycliffe went on:—'Mark with what flights
 Of wilder'd reverie he writes:—

The Letter.

" 'Ruler of Mortham's destiny!
 Though dead, thy victim lives to thee.
 Once had he all that binds to life—
 A lovely child, a lovelier wife;
 Wealth, fame, and friendship, were his own—
 Thou gavest the word, and they are flown.
 Mark how he pays thee:—To thy hand
 He yields his honours and his land,
 One boon premised;—Restore his child!
 And, from his native land exiled,
 Mortham no more returns to claim
 His lands, his honours, or his name;
 Refuse him this, and from the slain
 Thou shalt see Mortham rise again.'—

XII.

" This billet while the baron read,
 His faltering accents show'd his dread;
 He press'd his forehead with his palm,
 Then took a scornful tone and calm:
 ' Wild as the winds, as billows wild!
 What wot I of his spouse or child?
 Hither he brought a joyous dame,
 Unknown her lineage or her name:
 Her, in some frantic fit, he slew;
 The nurse and child in fear withdrew.
 Heaven be my witness! wist I where
 To find this youth, my kinsman's heir,—
 Unguerdon'd, I would give with joy
 The father's arms to fold his boy,
 And Mortham's lands and towers resign
 To the just heirs of Mortham's line.'—
 Thou know'st that scarcely e'en his fear
 Suppresses Denzil's cynic sneer;—
 ' Then happy is thy vassal's part,'
 He said, 'to ease his patron's heart
 In thine own jailer's watchful care
 Lies Mortham's just and rightful heir:
 Thy generous wish is fully won,—
 Redmond O'Neale is Mortham's son.'—

XIII.

"Up starting with a frenzied look,
His clenched hand the Baron shook :
'Is Hell at work? or dost thou rave,
Or darest thou palter with me, slave!
Perchance thou wot'st not, Barnard's towers
Have racks, of strange and ghastly powers'
Denzil, who well his safety knew,
Firmly rejoin'd, 'I tell thee true.
Thy racks could give thee but to know
The proofs, which I, untortured, show.—
It chanced upon a winter night,
When early snow made Stanmore white,
That very night, when first of all
Redmond O'Neale saw Rokeby-hall,
It was my goodly lot to gain
A reliquary and a chain,
Twisted and chased of massive gold.
—Demand not how the prize I hold?
It was not given, nor lent, nor sold.—
Gilt tablets to the chain were hung,
With letters in the Irish tongue.
I hid my spoil, for there was need
That I should leave the land with speed;
Nor then I deem'd it safe to bear
On mine own person gems so rare.
Small heed I of the tablets took,
But since have spell'd them by the book,
When some sojourn in Erin's land
Of their wild speech had given command,
But darkling was the sense; the phrase
And language those of other days,
Involved of purpose, as to foil
An interloper's prying toil.
The words, but not the sense, I knew,
Till fortune gave the guiding clew.

XIV.

" 'Three days since, was that clew reveal'd,
In Thorsgill as I lay conceal'd,
And heard at full when Rokeby's Maid
Her uncle's history display'd;
And now I can interpret well
Each syllable the tablets tell.
Mark, then: Fair Edith was the joy
Of old O'Neale of Clandeboy;
But from her sire and country fled,
In secret Mortham's Lord to wed.
O'Neale, his first resentment o'er,
Despatch'd his son to Greta's shore,
Enjoining he should make him known
(Until his farther will were shown)
To Edith, but to her alone.
What of their ill-starr'd meeting fell,
Lord Wycliffe knows, and none so well.

XV.

" 'O'Neale it was, who, in despair,
 Robb'd Mortham of his infant heir,
 He bred him in their nurture wild,
 And call'd him murder'd Connel's child.
 Soon died the nurse; the Clan believed
 What from their Chieftain they received.
 His purpose was, that ne'er again
 The boy should cross the Irish main;
 But, like his mountain sires, enjoy
 The woods and wastes of Clandeboy.
 Then on the land wild troubles came,
 And stronger Chieftains urged a claim,
 And wrested from the old man's hands
 His native towers, his father's lands.
 Unable then, amid the strife,
 To guard young Redmond's rights or life.
 Late and reluctant he restores
 The infant to his native shores,
 With goodly gifts and letters stored,
 With many a deep conjuring word,
 To Mortham and to Rokeby's Lord.
 Nought knew the clod of Irish earth,
 Who was the guide, of Redmond's birth;
 But deem'd his Chief's commands were laid
 On both, by both to be obey'd.
 How he was wounded by the way,
 I need not, and I list not say.'—

XVI.

" 'A wondrous tale! and, grant it true,
 What,' Wycliffe answer'd, 'might I do?
 Heaven knows, as willingly as now
 I raise the bonnet from my brow,
 Would I my kinsman's manors fair,
 Restore to Mortham, or his heir;
 But Mortham is distraught—O'Neale
 Has drawn for tyranny his steel,
 Malignant to our rightful cause,
 And train'd in Rome's delusive laws.
 Hark thee apart!'—They whisper'd long,
 Till Denzil's voice grew bold and strong:—
 'My proofs! I never will,' he said,
 'Show mortal man where they are laid.
 Nor hope discovery to foreclose,
 By giving me to feed the crows;
 For I have mates at large, who know
 Where I am wont such toys to stow.
 Free me from peril and from band,
 These tablets are at thy command;
 Nor were it hard to form some train,
 To wile old Mortham o'er the main.
 Then, lunatic's nor papist's hand
 Should wrest from thine the goodly land.—

—‘I like thy wit,’ said Wycliffe, ‘well;
 But here in hostage shalt thou dwell.
 Thy son, unless my purpose err,
 May prove the trustier messenger.
 A scroll to Mortham shall he bear
 From me, and fetch these tokens rare.
 Gold shalt thou have, and that good store,
 And freedom, his commission o’er;
 But if his faith should chance to fail,
 The gibbet frees thee from the jail.’—

XVII.

“Mesh’d in the net himself had twined,
 What subterfuge could Denzil find?
 He told me, with reluctant sigh,
 That hidden here the tokens lie;
 Conjured my swift return and aid,
 By all he scoff’d and disobey’d,
 And look’d as if the noose were tied,
 And I the priest who left his side.
 This scroll for Mortham Wycliffe gave,
 Whom I must seek by Greta’s wave;
 Or in the hut where chief he hides,
 Where Thorsgill’s forester resides.
 (Thence chanced it, wandering in the glade,
 That he descried our ambuscade.)
 I was dismissed as evening fell,
 And reached but now this rocky cell.”—
 “Give Oswald’s letter.”—Bertram read,
 And tore it fiercely, shred by shred:—
 “All lies and villany! to blind
 His noble kinsman’s generous mind,
 And train him on from day to day,
 Till he can take his life away.—
 And now, declare thy purpose, youth,
 Nor dare to answer, save the truth;
 If aught I mark of Denzil’s art,
 I’ll tear the secret from thy heart!”—

XVIII.

“It needs not. I renounce,” he said,
 “My tutor and his deadly trade.
 Fix’d was my purpose to declare
 To Mortham, Redmond is his heir;
 To tell him in what risk he stands,
 And yield these tokens to his hands.
 Fix’d was my purpose to atone,
 Far as I may, the evil done;
 And fix’d it rests—if I survive
 This night, and leave this cave alive.”—
 “And Denzil?”—“Let them ply the rack,
 Even till his joints and sinews crack!
 If Oswald tear him limb from limb,
 What ruth can Denzil claim from him.

Whose thoughtless youth he led astray,
 And damn'd to this unhallow'd way?
 He school'd me, faith and vows were vain;
 Now let my master reap his gain."—
 "True," answer'd Bertram, "'tis his meed;
 There's retribution in the deed.
 But thou—thou art not for our course,
 Hast fear, hast pity, hast remorse:
 And he, with us the gale who braves,
 Must heave such cargo to the waves,
 Or lag with overloaded prore,
 While barks unburden'd reach the shore."

XIX.

He paused, and, stretching him at length,
 Seem'd to repose his bulky strength.
 Communing with his secret mind,
 As half he sat, and half reclined,
 One ample hand his forehead press'd,
 And one was dropp'd across his breast.
 The shaggy eyebrows deeper came
 Above his eyes of swarthy flame;
 His lip of pride a while forbore
 The haughty curve till then it wore;
 The unalter'd fierceness of his look
 A shade of darken'd sadness took,—
 For dark and sad a presage press'd
 Resistlessly on Bertram's breast,—
 And when he spoke, his wonted tone,
 So fierce, abrupt, and brief, was gone.
 His voice was steady, low, and deep,
 Like distant waves when breezes sleep;
 And sorrow mix'd with Edmund's fear,
 Its low unbroken depth to hear.

XX.

"Edmund, in thy sad tale I find
 The woe that warp'd my patron's mind:
 'T would wake the fountains of the eye
 In other men, but mine are dry.
 Mortham must never see the fool,
 That sold himself base Wycliffe's tool;
 Yet less from thirst of sordid gain,
 Than to avenge supposed disdain.
 Say, Bertram rues his fault;—a word,
 Till now, from Bertram never heard:
 Say, too, that Mortham's Lord he pray:
 To think but on their former days;
 On Quarianna's beach and rock,
 On Cayo's bursting battle-shock,
 On Darien's sands and deadly dew,
 And on the dart Tlatzeca threw;—
 Perchance my patron yet may hear
 More that may grace his comrade's bier.

My soul hath felt a secret weight,
 A warning of approaching fate :
 A priest had said, 'Return, repent !'
 As well to bid that rock be rent.
 Firm as that flint I face mine end ;
 My heart may burst, but cannot bend.

XXI.

"The dawning of my youth, with awe
 And prophecy, the Dalesmen saw ;
 For over Redesdale it came,
 As bodeful as their beacon-flame.
 Edmund, thy years were scarcely mine,
 When, challenging the Clans of Tyne
 To bring their best my brand to prove,
 O'er Hexham's altar hung my glove ;
 But Tynedale, nor in tower nor town,
 Held champion meet to take it down.
 My noontide, India may declare ;
 Like her fierce sun, I fired the air !
 Like him, to wood and cave bade fly
 Her natives, from mine angry eye.
 Panama's maids shall long look pale
 When Risingham inspires the tale ;
 Chili's dark matrons long shall tame
 The froward child with Bertram's name.
 And now, my race of terror run,
 Mine be the eve of tropic sun !
 No pale gradations quench his ray.
 No twilight dews his wrath allay ;
 With disk like battle-target red,
 He rushes to his burning bed,
 Dyes the wide wave with bloody light,
 Then sinks at once—and all is night.—

XXII.

"Now to thy mission, Edmund. Fly,
 Seek Mortham out, and bid him hie
 To Richmond, where his troops are laid,
 And lead his force to Redmond's aid.
 Say, till he reaches Eglistone,
 A friend will watch to guard his son.
 Now, fare-thee-well ; for night draws on,
 And I would rest me here alone."
 Despite his ill-dissembled fear,
 There swam in Edmund's eye a tear :
 A tribute to the courage high,
 Which stoop'd not in extremity,
 But strove, irregularly great,
 To triumph o'er approaching fate !
 Bertram beheld the dewdrop start,
 It almost touch'd his iron heart :—
 "I did not think there lived," he said,
 "One, who would tear for Bertram shed."
 He loosen'd then his baldric's hold,
 A buckle broad of massive gold :—

"Of all the spoil that paid his pains,
But this with Risingham remains ;
And this, dear Edmund, thou shalt take,
And wear it long for Bertram's sake.
Once more—to Mortham speed amain ;
Farewell ! and turn thee not again."

XXIII.

The night has yielded to the morn,
And far the hours of prime are worn.
Oswald, who, since the dawn of day,
Had cursed his messenger's delay,
Impatient question'd now his train,
"Was Denzil's son return'd again?"
It chanced there answer'd of the crew,
A menial, who young Edmund knew :
"No son of Denzil this,"—he said ;
"A peasant boy from Winston glade,
For song and minstrelsy renown'd,
And knavish pranks, the hamlets round."
"Not Denzil's son !—from Winston vale !—
Then it was false, that specious tale ;
Or, worse—he hath despatch'd the youth
To show to Mortham's lord its truth.
Fool that I was !—but 'tis too late ;—
This is the very turn of fate !—
The tale, or true or false, relies
On Denzil's evidence !—He dies !—
Ho ! Provost Marshal ! instantly
Lead Denzil to the gallows-tree !
Allow him not a parting word ;
Short be the shrift, and sure the cord !
Then let his gory head appal
Marauders from the Castle-wall.
Lead forth thy guard, that duty done,
With best despatch to Eglistone.—
—Basil, tell Wilfrid he must straight
Attend me at the Castle-gate."

XXIV.

"Alas !" the old domestic said,
And shook his venerable head,
"Alas, my Lord ! full ill to-day
May my young master brook the way !
The leech has spoke with grave alarm,
Of unseen hurt, of secret harm,
Of sorrow lurking at the heart,
That mars and lets his healing art."—
"Tush ! tell not me !—Romantic boys
Pine themselves sick for airy toys,
I will find cure for Wilfrid soon ;
Bid him for Eglistone be boune,
And quick !—I hear the dull death-drum
Tell Denzil's hour of fate is come."

He paused with scornful smile, and then
 Resumed his train of thought agen.
 "Now comes my fortune's crisis near!
 Entreaty boots not—instant fear,
 Nought else, can bend Matilda's pride,
 Or win her to be Wilfrid's bride.
 But when she sees the scaffold placed,
 With axe and block and headsman graced,
 And when she deems, that to deny
 Dooms Redmond and her sire to die,
 She must give way.—Then, were the line
 Of Rokeby once combined with mine,
 I gain the weather-gage of fate!
 If Mortham come, he comes too late,
 While I, allied thus and prepared,
 Bid him defiance to his beard.—
 —If she prove stubborn, shall I dare
 To drop the axe?—Soft! pause we there.
 Mortham still lives—yon youth may tell
 His tale—and Fairfax loves him well;—
 Else, wherefore should I now delay
 To sweep this Redmond from my way?—
 But she to piety perforce
 Must yield.—Without there! Sound to horse!"

XXV.

'Twas bustle in the court below,—
 "Mount, and march forward!"—Forth they go:
 Steeds neigh and trample all around,
 Steel rings, spears glimmer, trumpets sound.—
 Just then was sung his parting hymn;
 And Denzil turn'd his eyeballs dim,
 And, scarcely conscious what he sees,
 Follows the horsemen down the Tees;
 And scarcely conscious what he hears,
 The trumpets tingle in his ears.
 O'er the long bridge they're sweeping now
 The van is hid by greenwood bough;
 But ere the rearward had pass'd o'er,
 Guy Denzil heard and saw no more!
 One stroke, upon the Castle bell,
 To Oswald rung his dying knell.

XXVI.

O, for that pencil, erst profuse
 Of chivalry's emblazon'd hues,
 That traced of old, in Woodstock bower,
 The pageant of the Leaf and Flower,
 And bodied forth the tourney high,
 Held for the hand of Emily!
 Then might I paint the tumult broad,
 That to the crowded abbey flow'd,
 And pour'd, as with an ocean's sound,
 Into the church's ample bound!
 Then might I show each varying mien,
 Exulting, woeful, or serene;

Indifference, with his idiot stare,
 And Sympathy, with anxious air,
 Paint the dejected Cavalier,
 Doubtful, disarm'd, and sad of cheer;
 And his proud foe, whose formal eye
 Claim'd conquest now and mastery;
 And the brute crowd, whose envious zeal
 Huzzas each turn of Fortune's wheel,
 And loudest shouts when lowest lie
 Exalted worth and station high.
 Yet what may such a wish avail?
 'Tis mine to tell an onward tale,
 Hurrying, as best I can, along,
 The hearers and the hasty song;—
 Like traveller when approaching home,
 Who sees the shades of evening come,
 And must not now his course delay,
 Or choose the fair, but winding way;
 Nay, scarcely may his pace suspend,
 Where o'er his head the wildings bend,
 To bless the breeze that cools his brow,
 Or snatch a blossom from the bough.

XXVII.

The reverend pile lay wild and waste,
 Profaned, dishonour'd, and defaced.
 Through storied lattices no more
 In soften'd light the sunbeams pour,
 Gilding the Gothic sculpture rich
 Of shrine, and monument, and niche.
 The Civil fury of the time
 Made sport of sacrilegious crime;
 For dark Fanaticism rent
 Altar, and screen, and ornament,
 And peasant hands the tombs o'erthrew
 Of Bowes, of Rokeby, and Fitz-Hugh.
 And now was seen, unwonted sight,
 In holy walls a scaffold dight!
 Where once the priest, of grace divine
 Dealt to his flock the mystic sign;
 There stood the block display'd, and there
 The headsman grim his hatchet bare;
 And for the word of Hope and Faith,
 Resounded loud a doom of death.
 Thrice the fierce trumpet's breath was heard,
 And echo'd thrice the herald's word,
 Dooming, for breach of martial laws,
 And treason to the Commons' cause,
 The Knight of Rokeby and O'Neale
 To stoop their heads to block and steel.
 The trumpets flourish'd high and shrill,
 Then was a silence dead and still;
 And silent prayers to heaven were cast,
 And stifled sobs were bursting fast,

Till from the crowd begun to rise
 Murmurs of sorrow or surprise,
 And from the distant aisles there came
 Deep-mutter'd threats, with Wycliffe's name.

XXVIII.

But Oswald, guarded by his band,
 Powerful in evil, waved his hand,
 And bade Sedition's voice be dead,
 On peril of the murmurer's head.
 Then first his glance sought Rokeby's Knight,
 Who gazed on the tremendous sight,
 As calm as if he came a guest
 To kindred Baron's feudal feast,
 As calm as if that trumpet-call
 Were summons to the banner'd hall;
 Firm in his loyalty he stood,
 And prompt to seal it with his blood.
 With downcast look drew Oswald nigh,—
 He durst not cope with Rokeby's eye!—
 And said, with low and faltering breath,
 "Thou know'st the terms of life and death."
 The Knight then turn'd, and sternly smiled;
 "The maiden is mine only child,
 Yet shall my blessing leave her head,
 If with a traitor's son she wed."
 Then Redmond spoke: "The life of one
 Might thy malignity atone,
 On me be flung a double guilt!
 Spare Rokeby's blood, let mine be spilt!"
 Wycliffe had listen'd to his suit,
 But dread prevail'd, and he was mute.

XXIX.

And now he pours his choice of fear
 In secret on Matilda's ear:
 "An union form'd with me and mine,
 Ensures the faith of Rokeby's line.
 Consent, and all this dread array,
 Like morning dream, shall pass away;
 Refuse, and, by my duty press'd,
 I give the word—thou know'st the rest."
 Matilda, still and motionless,
 With terror heard the dread address,
 Pale as the sheeted maid who dies
 To hopeless love a sacrifice;
 Then rung her hands in agony,
 And round her cast bewilder'd eye—
 Now on the scaffold glanced, and now
 On Wycliffe's unrelenting brow.
 She veil'd her face, and, with a voice
 Scarce audible,—“I make my choice!
 Spare but their lives!—for aught beside,
 Let Wilfrid's doom my fate decide.

He once was generous!"—As she spoke,
 Dark Wycliffe's joy in triumph broke :—
 " Wilfrid, where loiter'd ye so late?
 Why upon Basil rest thy weight?—
 Art spell-bound by enchanter's wand?—
 Kneel, kneel, and take her yielded hand;
 Thank her with raptures, simple boy!
 Should tears and trembling speak thy joy?"
 " O hush, my sire! To prayer and tear
 Of mine thou hast refused thine ear;
 But now the awful hour draws on,
 When truth must speak in loftier tone."

XXX.

He took Matilda's hand :—" Dear maid,
 Couldst thou so injure me," he said,
 " Of thy poor friend so basely deem,
 As blend with him this barbarous scheme?
 Alas! my efforts made in vain,
 Might well have saved this added pain.
 But now, bear witness earth and heaven,
 That ne'er was hope to mortal given,
 So twisted with the strings of life,
 As this—to call Matilda wife!
 I bid it now for ever part,
 And with the effort bursts my heart."
 His feeble frame was worn so low,
 With wounds, with watching, and with woe,
 That nature could no more sustain
 The agony of mental pain.
 He kneel'd—his lip her hand had press'd,
 Just then he felt the stern arrest.
 Lower and lower sunk his head,—
 They raised him,—but the life was fled!
 Then, first alarm'd, his sire and train
 Tried every aid, but tried in vain.
 The soul, too soft its ills to bear,
 Had left our mortal hemisphere,
 And sought in better world the meed,
 To blameless life by Heaven decreed.

XXXI.

The wretched sire beheld, aghast,
 With Wilfrid all his projects past;—
 All turn'd and centred on his son,
 On Wilfrid all—and he was gone.
 " And I am childless now," he said;
 " Childless, through that relentless maid!
 A lifetime's arts, in vain essay'd,
 Are bursting on their artist's head!—
 Here lies my Wilfrid dead—and there
 Comes hated Mortham for his heir,
 Eager to knit in happy band
 With Rokeby's heiress Redmond's hand,

And shall their triumph soar o'er all
 The schemes deep-laid to work their fall?
 No!—deeds, which prudence might not dare,
 Appal not vengeance and despair.
 The murd'ress weeps upon his bier—
 I'll change to real that feigned tear!
 They all shall share destruction's shock;—
 Ho! lead the captives to the block!"
 But ill his Provost could divine
 His feelings, and forbore the sign.
 "Slave! to the block!—or I, or they,
 Shall face the judgment-seat this day!"

XXXII.

The outmost crowd have heard a sound,
 Like horse's hoof on harden'd ground;
 Nearer it came, and yet more near,—
 The very death's-men paused to hear.
 'Tis in the churchyard now—the tread
 Hath waked the dwelling of the dead!
 Fresh sod, and old sepulchral stone,
 Return the tramp in varied tone.
 All eyes upon the gateway hung,
 When through the Gothic arch there sprung
 A horseman arm'd, at headlong speed—
 Sable his cloak, his plume, his steed.
 Fire from the flinty floor was spurn'd,
 The vaults unwonted clang return'd!—
 One instant's glance around he threw,
 From saddlebow his pistol drew.
 Grimly determined was his look!
 His charger with the spurs he strook—
 All scatter'd backward as he came,
 For all knew Bertram Risingham!
 Three bounds that noble courser gave;
 The first has reach'd the central nave,
 The second clear'd the chancel wide,
 The third—he was at Wycliffe's side.
 Full levell'd at the Baron's head,
 Rung the report—the bullet sped—
 And to his long account, and last,
 Without a groan dark Oswald past!
 All was so quick, that it might seem
 A flash of lightning, or a dream.

XXXIII.

While yet the smoke the deed conceals,
 Bertram his ready charger wheels;
 But flounder'd on the pavement-floor
 The steed, and down the rider bore,
 And, bursting in the headlong sway,
 The faithless saddle-girths gave way.
 'Twas while he toil'd him to be freed,
 And with the rein to raise the steed,

That from amazement's iron trance
 All Wycliffe's soldiers waked at once.
 Sword, halberd, musket-but, their blows
 Hail'd upon Bertram as he rose;
 A score of pikes, with each a wound,
 Bore down and pinn'd him to the ground;
 But still his struggling force he rears,
 'Gainst hacking brands and stabbing spears;
 Thrice from assailants shook him free,
 Once gain'd his feet, and twice his knee.
 By tenfold odds oppress'd at length,
 Despite his struggles and his strength,
 He took a hundred mortal wounds,
 As mute as fox 'mongst mangling hounds;
 And when he died, his parting groan
 Had more of laughter than of moan!
 — They gazed, as when a lion dies,
 And hunters scarcely trust their eyes,
 But bend their weapons on the slain,
 Lest the grim king should rouse again!
 Then blow and insult some renew'd,
 And from the trunk, the head had hew'd,
 But Basil's voice the deed forbade;
 A mantle o'er the corpse he laid:—
 "Fell as he was in act and mind,
 He left no bolder heart behind;
 Then gave him, for a soldier meet,
 A soldier's cloak for winding sheet."

XXXIV.

No more of death and dying pang,
 No more of trump and bugle clang,
 Though through the sounding woods there come
 Banner and bugle, trump and drum.
 Arm'd with such powers as well had freed
 Young Redmond at his utmost need,
 And back'd with such a band of horse,
 As might less ample powers enforce;
 Possess'd of every proof and sign
 That gave an heir to Mortham's line,
 And yielded to a father's arms
 An image of his Edith's charms,—
 Mortham is come, to hear and see
 Of this strange morn the history,
 What saw he?—not the church's floor,
 Cumber'd with dead and stain'd with gore;
 What heard he?—not the clamorous crowd,
 That shout their gratulations loud:
 Redmond he saw and heard alone,
 Clasp'd him, and sobb'd—My son! my son!"—

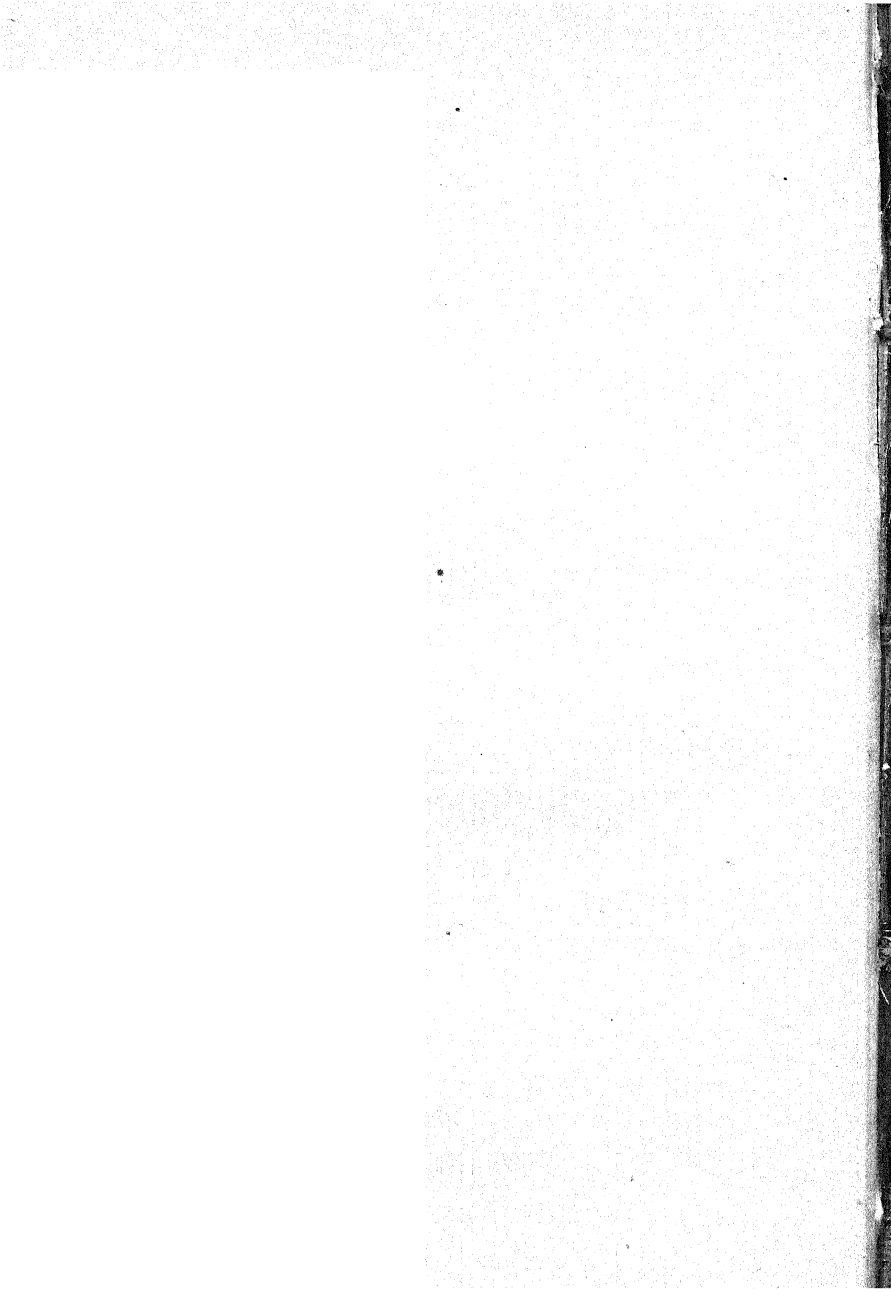
XXXV.

This chanced upon a summer morn,
 When yellow waved the heavy corn:

But when brown August o'er the land
Call'd forth the reaper's busy band,
A gladsome sight the silvan road
From Eglistone to Mortham show'd.
A while the hardy rustic leaves
The task to bind and pile the sheaves;
And maids their sickles fling aside,
To gaze on bridegroom and on bride;
And childhood's wondering group draws near,
And from the gleaner's hands the ear
Drops, while she folds them for a prayer
And blessing on the lovely pair.
'Twas then the Maid of Rokeby gave
Her plighted troth to Redmond brave;
And Teesdale can remember yet
How Fate to Virtue paid her debt,
And, for their troubles, bade them prove
A lengthen'd life of peace and love.

Time and Tide had thus their sway,
Yielding, like an April day,
Smiling noon for sullen morrow,
Years of joy for hours of sorrow!





THE LORD OF THE ISLES

IN SIX CANTOS.



*Through that wild throng the Father passed,
And reached the Royal Bruce at last.
He leant against a stranded boat,
That the approaching tide must float.*

NOTICE TO EDITION 1833.

THE composition of "The Lord of the Isles," as we now have it in the Author's MS., seems to have been begun at Abbotsford in the autumn of 1814, and it ended at Edinburgh the 16th of December. Some part of Canto I. had probably been committed to writing in a rougher form, earlier in the year. The original quarto appeared on the 2d of January 1815.

It may be mentioned, that those parts of this Poem which were written at Abbotsford, were composed almost all in the presence of Sir Walter Scott's family, and many in that of casual visitors also: the original cottage which he then occupied not affording him any means of retirement. Neither conversation nor music seemed to disturb him.

INTRODUCTION TO EDITION 1893.

I COULD hardly have chosen a subject more popular in Scotland, than anything connected with the Bruce's history, unless I had attempted that of Wallace. But I am decidedly of opinion, that a popular, or what is called a *taking* title, though well qualified to ensure the publishers against loss, and clear their shelves of the original impression, is rather apt to be hazardous than otherwise to the reputation of the author. He who attempts a subject of distinguished popularity, has not the privilege of awakening the enthusiasm of his audience; on the contrary, it is already awakened, and glows, it may be, more ardently than that of the author himself. In this case, the warmth of the author is inferior to that of the party whom he addresses, who has, therefore, little chance of being, in Bayes's phrase, "elevated and surprised" by what he has thought of with more enthusiasm than the writer. The sense of this risk, joined to the consciousness of striving against wind and tide, made the task of composing the proposed Poem somewhat heavy and hopeless; but, like the prize-fighter in "As You Like It," I was to wrestle for my reputation, and not neglect any advantage. In a most agreeable pleasure-voyage, which I have tried to commemorate in the Introduction to the new edition of the "Pirate," I visited, in social and friendly company, the coasts and islands of Scotland, and made myself acquainted with the localities of which I meant to treat. But this voyage, which was in every other effect so delightful, was in its conclusion saddened by one of those strokes of fate which so often mingle themselves with our pleasures. The accomplished and excellent person who had recommended to me the subject for "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," and to whom I proposed to inscribe what I already suspected might be the close of my poetical labours, was unexpectedly removed from the world, which she seemed only to have visited for purposes of kindness and benevolence. It is needless to say how the author's feelings, or the composition of his trifling work, were affected by a circumstance which occasioned so many tears and so much sorrow. True it is, that "The Lord of the Isles" was concluded, unwillingly and in haste, under the painful feeling of one who has a task which must be finished, rather than with the ardour of one who endeavours to perform that task well. Although the Poem cannot be said to have made a favourable impression on the public, the sale of fifteen thousand copies enabled the author to retreat from the field with the honours of war.

In the meantime, what was necessarily to be considered as a failure, was much reconciled to my feelings by the success attend-

ing my attempt in another species of composition. "Waverley" had, under strict incognito, taken its flight from the press, just before I set out upon the voyage already mentioned; it had now made its way to popularity, and the success of that work, and the volumes which followed, was sufficient to have satisfied a greater appetite for applause, than I have at any time possessed."

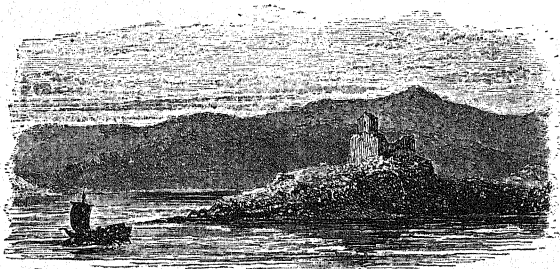
I may as well add in this place, that, being much urged by my intimate friend, now unhappily no more, William Erskine, (a Scottish judge, by the title of Lord Kinnedder,) I agreed to write the little romantic tale called the "Bridal of Triermain;" but it was on the condition that he should make no serious effort to disown the composition, if report should lay it at his door. As he was more than suspected of a taste for poetry, and as I took care, in several places, to mix something which might resemble (as far as was in my power) my friend's feeling and manner, the train easily caught, and two large editions were sold. A third being called for, Lord Kinnedder became unwilling to aid any longer a deception which was going further than he expected or desired, and the real author's name was given. Upon another occasion, I sent up another of these trifles, which, like schoolboys' kites, served to show how the wind of popular taste was setting. The manner was supposed to be that of a rude minstrel or Scald, in opposition to the "Bridal of Triermain," which was designed to belong rather to the Italian school.

This new fugitive piece was called "Harold the Dauntless;" and I am still astonished at my having committed the gross error of selecting the very name which Lord Byron had made so famous. It encountered rather an odd fate. My ingenious friend, Mr. James Hogg, had published, about the same time, a work called the "Poetic Mirror," containing imitations of the principal living poets. There was in it a very good imitation of my own style, which bore such a resemblance to "Harold the Dauntless," that there was no discovering the original from the imitation; and I believe that many who took the trouble of thinking upon the subject, were rather of opinion that my ingenious friend was the true, and not the fictitious Simon Pure. Since this period, which was in the year 1817, the author has not been an intruder on the public by any poetical work of importance.

W. S.

ABBOTSFORD, April 1830.

* The first edition of Waverley appeared in July 1814.

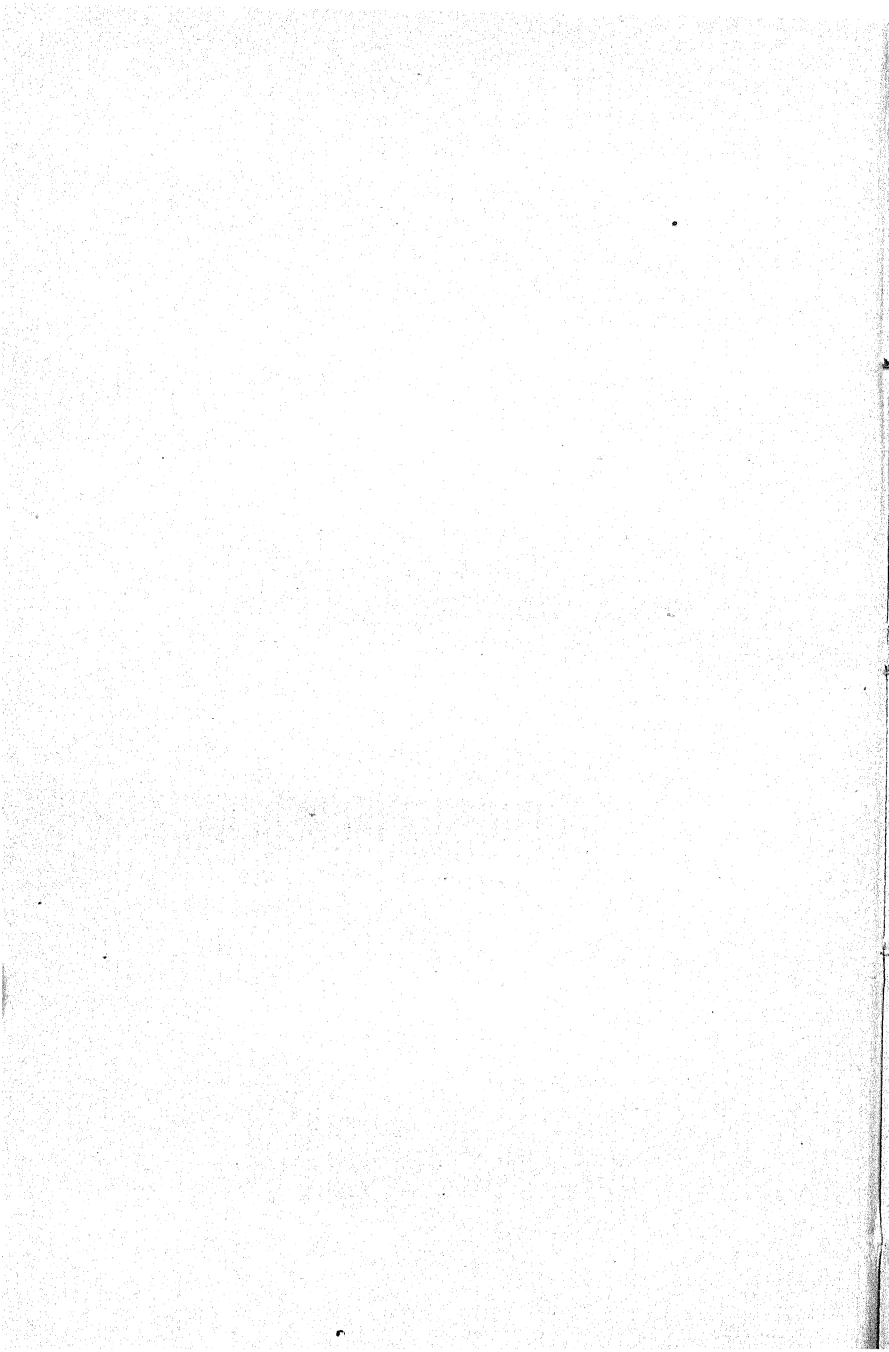


ARTORNISH CASTLE.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE FIRST EDITION.

The scene of this poem lies, at first, in the Castle of Artornish, on the coast of Argyleshire ; and, afterwards, in the Islands of Skye and Arran, and upon the coast of Ayrshire. Finally, it is laid near Stirling. The story opens in the spring of the year 1307, when Bruce, who had been driven out of Scotland by the English, and the Barons who adhered to that foreign interest, returned from the Island of Rathlin on the coast of Ireland, again to assert his claims to the Scottish crown. Many of the personages and incidents introduced are of historical celebrity. The authorities used are chiefly those of the venerable Lord Hailes, as well entitled to be called the restorer of Scottish history, as Bruce the restorer of Scottish monarchy ; and of Archdeacon Barbour, a correct edition of whose Metrical History of Robert Bruce will soon, I trust, appear under the care of my learned friend, the Rev. Dr. Jamieson.

ABBOTSFORD, 10th December 1814.



THE
LORD OF THE ISLES
CANTO FIRST.

AUTUMN departs—but still his mantle's fold
Rests on the groves of noble Somerville;
Beneath a shroud of russet dropp'd with gold,
Tweed and his tributaries mingle still;
Hoarser the wind, and deeper sounds the rill,
Yet lingering notes of silvan music swell,
The deep-toned cushat, and the redbreast shrill;
And yet some tints of summer splendour tell
When the broad sun sinks down on Ettrick's western fell.

Autumn departs—from Gala's fields no more
Come rural sounds, our kindred banks to cheer;
Blent with the stream, and gale that wafts it o'er,
No more the distant reaper's mirth we hear.
The last blithe shout hath died upon our ear,
And harvest-home hath hush'd the clanging wain,
On the waste hill no forms of life appear,
Save where, sad laggard of the autumnal train,
Some age-struck wanderer gleans few ears of scatter'd grain.

Deem'st thou these sadden'd scenes have pleasure still,
Lovest thou through Autumn's fading realms to stray,
To see the heath-flower wither'd on the hill,
To listen to the wood's expiring lay,
To note the red leaf shivering on the spray,
To mark the last bright tints the mountain stain,
On the waste fields to trace the gleaner's way,
And moralize on mortal joy and pain?—
O! if such scenes thou lovest, scorn not the minstrel strain.

No! do not scorn, although its hoarser note
Scarce with the cushat's homely song can vie,
Though faint its beauties as the tints remote
That gleam through mist in autumn's evening sky,
And few as leaves that tremble, sear and dry,
When wild November hath his bugle wound;
Nor mock my toil—a lonely gleaner I,
Through fields time-wasted, on sad inquest bound,
Where happier bards of yore have richer harvest found.

So shalt thou list, and haply not unmoved,
 To a wild tale of Albyn's warrior day;
 In distant lands, by the rough West reproved,
 Still live some relics of the ancient lay.
 For, when on Coolin's hills the lights decay,
 With such the Seer of Skye the eve beguiles;
 'Tis known amid the pathless wastes of Reay,
 In Harries known, and in Iona's piles,
 Where rest from mortal coil the Mighty of the Isles.

I.

"WAKE, Maid of Lorn!" the Minstrels sung,—
 Thy rugged halls, Artornish! rung,¹
 And the dark seas, thy towers that lave,
 Heaved on the beach a softer wave,
 As 'mid the tuneful choir to keep
 The diapason of the Deep.
 Lull'd were the winds on Inninmore,
 And green Loch-Aline's woodland shore,
 As if wild woods and waves had pleasure
 In listing to the lovely measure.
 And ne'er to symphony more sweet
 Gave mountain echoes answer meet,
 Since, met from mainland and from isle,
 Ross, Arran, Islay, and Argyle,
 Each minstrel's tributary lay
 Paid homage to the festal day.
 Dull and dishonour'd were the bard,
 Worthless of guerdon and regard,
 Deaf to the hope of minstrel fame,
 Or lady's smiles, his noblest aim,
 Who on that morn's resistless call
 Were silent in Artornish hall.

II.

"Wake Maid of Lorn!"—'twas thus they sung,
 And yet more proud the descant rung,
 "Wake, Maid of Lorn! high right is ours,
 To charm dull sleep from Beauty's bowers;
 Earth, Ocean, Air, have nought so shy
 But owns the power of minstrelsy.
 In Lettermore the timid deer
 Will pause, the harp's wild chime to hear;
 Rude Heiskar's seal, through surges dark,
 Will long pursue the minstrel's bark;²
 To list his notes, the eagle proud
 Will poise him on Ben-Cailliach's cloud;

¹ See Note 1 of the "NOTES TO THE LORD OF THE ISLES" in the Appendix. The figures of reference throughout the poem relate to further Notes in the Appendix.

Then let not Maiden's ear disdain
The summons of the minstrel train,
But, while our harps wild music make,
Edith of Lorn, awake, awake!

III.

"O wake, while Dawn, with dewy shine,
Wakes Nature's charms to vie with thine!
She bids the mottled thrush rejoice
To mate thy melody of voice;
The dew that on the violet lies
Mocks the dark lustre of thine eyes;
But, Edith, wake, and all we see
Of sweet and fair shall yield to thee!"—
"She comes not yet," grey Ferrand cried;
"Brethren, let softer spell be tried,
Those notes prolong'd, that soothing theme,
Which best may mix with Beauty's dream,
And whisper, with their silvery tone,
The hope she loves, yet fears to own."
He spoke, and on the harp-strings died
The strains of flattery and of pride;
More soft, more low, more tender fell
The lay of love he bade them tell.

IV.

"Wake, Maid of Lorn! the moments fly,
Which yet that maiden-name allow;
Wake, Maiden, wake! the hour is nigh,
When love shall claim a plighted vow
By Fear, thy bosom's fluttering guest,
By Hope, that soon shall fears remove,
We bid thee break the bonds of rest,
And wake thee at the call of Love!"
"Wake, Edith, wake! in yonder bay
Lies many a galley gaily mann'd,
We hear the merry pibroch's play,
We see the streamers' silken band.
What Chieftain's praise these pibrochs swell,
What crest is on these banners wove,
The harp, the minstrel, dare not tell—
The riddle must be read by Love."

V.

Retired her maiden train among,
Edith of Lorn received the song,
But tamed the minstrel's pride had been
That had her cold demeanour seen;
For not upon her cheek awoke
The glow of pride when Flattery spoke,
Nor could their tenderest numbers bring
One sigh responsive to the string.
As vainly had her maidens vied
In skill to deck the princely bride.

Her locks, in dark-brown length array'd,
 Cathleen of Ulna, 't was thine to braid;
 Young Eva with meet reverence drew
 On the light foot the silken shoe,
 While on the ankle's slender round
 Those strings of pearl fair Bertha wound,
 That, bleach'd Lochryan's depths within,
 Seem'd dusky still on Edith's skin.
 But Einion, of experience old,
 Had weightiest task—the mantle's fold
 In many an artful plait she tied,
 To shew the form it seem'd to hide,
 Till on the floor descending roll'd
 Its waves of crimson blent with gold.

VI.

O! lives there now so cold a maid,
 Who thus in beauty's pomp array'd,
 In beauty's proudest pitch of power,
 And conquest won—the bridal hour—
 With every charm that wins the heart,
 By Nature given, enhanced by Art,
 Could yet the fair reflection view,
 In the bright mirror pictured true,
 And not one dimple on her cheek
 A tell-tale consciousness bespeak?—
 Lives still such maid?—Fair damsels, say,
 For further vouches not my lay,
 Save that such lived in Britain's isle,
 When Lorn's bright Edith scorn'd to smile.

VII.

But Morag, to whose fostering care
 Proud Lorn had given his daughter fair,
 Morag, who saw a mother's aid
 By all a daughter's love repaid,
 (Strict was that bond—most kind of all—
 Inviolable in Highland hall)—
 Grey Morag sate a space apart,
 In Edith's eyes to read her heart.
 In vain the attendant's fond appeal
 To Morag's skill, to Morag's zeal;
 She mark'd her child receive their care,
 Cold as the image sculptured fair,
 (Form of some sainted patroness,
 Which cloister'd maids combine to dress;
 She mark'd—and knew her nursing's heart
 In the vain pomp took little part.
 Wistful a while she gazed—then press'd
 The maiden to her anxious breast
 In finish'd loveliness—and led
 To where a turret's airy head,
 Slender and steep, and battled round,
 O'erlook'd dark Mull! thy mighty Sound,¹
 Where thwarting tides, with mingled roar,
 Part thy swarth hills from Morven's shore.

VIII.

"Daughter," she said, "these seas behold,
 Round twice a hundred islands roll'd,
 From Hirt, that hears their northern roar
 To the green Islay's fertile shore;
 Or mainland turn, where many a tower
 Owns thy bold brother's feudal power,
 Each on its own dark cape reclined,
 And listening to its own wild wind,
 From where Mingarry, sternly placed,
 O'erawes the woodland and the waste,
 To where Dunstaffnage hears the raging
 Of Connal with its rocks engaging.
 Thinkst thou, amid this ample round,
 A single brow but thine has frown'd,
 To sadden this auspicious morn,
 That bids the daughter of high Lorn
 Impledge her spousal faith to wed
 The heir of mighty Somerled?⁴
 Ronald, from many a hero sprung,
 The fair, the valiant, and the young,
 LORD OF THE ISLES, whose lofty name⁵
 A thousand bards have given to fame,
 The mate of monarchs, and allied
 On equal terms with England's pride.—
 From Chieftain's tower to bondsman's cot,
 Who hears the tale, and triumphs not?
 The damsel dons her best attire,
 The shepherd lights his beltane fire,
 Joy! joy! each warder's horn hath sung,
 Joy! joy! each matin bell hath rung;
 The holy priest says grateful mass,
 Loud shouts each hardy galla-glass,
 No mountain den holds outcast boor,
 Of heart so dull, of soul so poor,
 But he hath flung his task aside,
 And claim'd this morn for holy-tide;
 Yet, empress of this joyful day,
 Edith is sad while all are gay."

IX.

Proud Edith's soul came to her eye,
 Resentment check'd the struggling sigh.
 Her hurrying hand indignant dried
 The burning tears of injured pride—
 "Morag, forbear! or lend thy praise
 To swell yon hireling harpers' lays;
 Make to yon maids thy boast of power,
 That they may waste a wondering hour,
 Telling of banners proudly borne,
 Of pealing bell and bugle horn,
 Or, theme more dear, of robes of price,
 Crownlets and gauds of rare device.
 But thou, experienced as thou art,
 Thinkst thou with these to cheat the heart,

That, bound in strong affection's chain,
Looks for return and looks in vain?
No! sum thine Edith's wretched lot
In these brief words—He loves her not!

X.

"Debate it not—too long I strove
To call his cold observance love,
All blinded by the league that styled
Edith of Lorn,—while yet a child,
She tripp'd the heath by Morag's side—
The brave Lord Ronald's destined bride.
Ere yet I saw him, while afar
His broadsword blazed in Scotland's war,
Train'd to believe our fates the same,
My bosom throbb'd when Ronald's name
Came gracing Fame's heroic tale,
Like perfume on the summer gale.
What pilgrim sought our halls, nor told
Of Ronald's deeds in battle bold;
Who touch'd the harp to heroes' praise,
But his achievements swell'd the lays?
Even Morag—not a tale of fame
Was hers but closed with Ronald's name.
He came; and all that had been told
Of his high worth seem'd poor and cold.
Tame, lifeless, void of energy,
Unjust to Ronald and to me!

XI.

"Since then, what thought had Edith's heart
And gave not plighted love its part?—
And what requital? cold delay—
Excuse that shunn'd the spousal day.—
It dawns, and Ronald is not here!—
Hunts he Bentalla's nimble deer,
Or loiters he in secret dell
To bid some lighter love farewell,
And swear, that though he may not scorn
A daughter of the House of Lorn,⁶
Yet, when these formal rites are o'er,
Again they meet, to part no more?"

XII.

—"Hush, daughter, hush! thy doubts remove,
More nobly think of Ronald's love.
Look, where beneath the castle grey
His fleet unmoor from Aros bay!
See'st not each galley's topmast bend,
As on the yards the sails ascend?
Hiding the dark-blue land, they rise
Like the white clouds on April skies;
The shouting vassals man the oars,
Behind them sink Mull's mountain shores,

Onward their merry course they keep,
Through whistling breeze and foaming deep.
And mark the headmost, seaward cast,
Stoop to the freshening gale her mast,
As if she veil'd its banner'd pride,
To greet afar her Prince's bride!
Thy Ronald comes and while in speed
His galley mates the flying steed,
He chides her sloth!—Fair Edith sigh'd,
Blush'd, sadly smiled, and thus replied:—

XIII.

"Sweet thought, but vain!—No, Morag! mark,
Type of his course, yon lonely bark,
That oft hath shifted helm and sail,
To win its way against the gale.
Since peep of morn, my vacant eyes
Have view'd by fits the course she tries;
Now, though the darkening scud comes on,
And dawn's fair promises be gone,
And though the weary crew may see
Our sheltering haven on their lee,
Still closer to the rising wind
They strive her shivering sail to bind,
Still nearer to the shelves' dread verge
At every tack her course they urge,
As if they fear'd Artornish more
Then adverse winds and breakers' roar."

XIV.

Sooth spoke the maid.—Amid the tide
The skiff she mark'd lay tossing sore,
And shifted oft her stooping side,
In weary tack from shore to shore.
Yet on her destined course no more
She gain'd, of forward way,
Than what a minstrel may compare
To the poor meed which peasants share,
Who toil the livelong day;
And such the risk her pilot braves,
That oft, before she wore,
Her boltsprit kiss'd the broken waves,
Where in white foam the ocean raves
Upon the shelving shore.
Yet, to their destined purpose true,
Undaunted toil'd her hardy crew,
Nor look'd where shelter lay,
Nor for Artornish Castle drew,
Nor steer'd for Aros bay.

XV.

Thus while they strove with wind and seas,
Borne onward by the willing breeze,
Lord Ronald's fleet swept by,

Steamer'd with silk, and trick'd with gold,
Mann'd with the noble and the bold

Of island chivalry.

Around their prows the ocean roars,
And chafes beneath their thousand oars,

Yet bears them on their way:

So chafes the war-horse in his might,
That fieldward bears some valiant knight,
Champs, till both bit and boss are white,

But, foaming, must obey.

On each gay deck they might behold
Lances of steel and crests of gold,
And hauberks with their burnish'd fold,

That shimmer'd fair and free;

And each proud galley, as she pass'd,
To the wild cadence of the blast

Give wilder minstrelsy.

Full many a shrill triumphant note
Saline and Scallastle bade float

Their misty shores around;

And Morven's echoes answer'd well,

And Duart heard the distant swell
Come down the darksome Sound

XVI.

So bore they on with mirth and pride,
And if that labouring bark they spied,

'Twas with such idle eye

As nobles cast on lowly boor,

When, toiling in his task obscure,

They pass him careless by.

Let them sweep on with heedless eyes!

But, had they known what mighty prize

In that frail vessel lay,

The famish'd wolf, that prowls the wold,

Had scatheless pass'd the unguarded fold,

Ere, drifting by these galleys bold,

Unchallenged were her way!

And thou, Lord Ronald, sweep thou on,

With mirth, and pride, and minstrel tone!

But hadst thou known who sail'd so nigh,

Far other glance were in thine eye!

Far other flush were on thy brow,

That, shaded by the bonnet, now

Assumes but ill the blithesome cheer

Of bridegroom when the bride is near!

XVII.

Yes, sweep they on!—We will not leave,
For them that triumph, those who grieve.

With that armada gay

Be laughter loud and jocund shout,

And bards to cheer the wassail rout,

With tale, romance, and lay;

And of wild mirth each clamorous art,
Which, if it cannot cheer the heart,
May stupify and stun its smart,
For one loud busy day.
Yes, sweep they on!—But with that skiff
Abides the minstrel tale,
Where there was dread of surge and cliff,
Labour that strain'd each sinew stiff,
And one sad Maiden's wail.

XVIII.

All day with fruitless strife they toil'd
With eve the ebbing currents boil'd
More fierce from strait and lake;
And midway through the channel met
Conflicting tides that foam and fret,
And high their mingled billows jet,
As spears, that, in the battle set,
Spring upward as they break.
Then, too, the lights of eve were past,
And louder sung the western blast
On rocks of Inninmore;
Rent was the sail, and strain'd the mast,
And many a leak was gaping fast,
And the pale steersman stood aghast,
And gave the conflict o'er.

XIX.

'Twas then that One, whose lofty look
Nor labour dull'd nor terror shook,
Thus to the Leader spoke:—
"Brother, how hopest thou to abide
The fury of this wilder'd tide,
Or how avoid the rock's rude side,
Until the day has broke?
Didst thou not mark the vessel reel,
With quivering planks, and groaning keel,
At the last billow's shock?
Yet how of better counsel tell,
Though here thou see'st poor Isabel
Half dead with want and fear;
For look on sea, or look on land,
Or yon dark sky—on every hand
Despair and death are near
For her alone I grieve,—on me
Danger sits light, by land and sea,
I follow where thou wilt;
Either to bide the tempest's lour,
Or wend to yon unfriendly tower,
Or rush amid their naval power,
With war-cry wake their wassail-hour,
And die with hand on hilt."—

XX.

That elder Leader's calm reply
In steady voice was given—

"In man's most dark extremity
 Oft succour dawns from Heaven.
Edward, trim thou the shatter'd sail,
The helm be mine, and down the gale
 Let our free course be driven;
So shall we 'scape the western bay,
The hostile fleet, the unequal fray,
So safely hold our vessel's way
 Beneath the Castle wall;
For if a hope of safety rest,
'Tis on the sacred name of guest,
Who seeks for shelter, storm-distress'd,
 Within a chieftain's hall.
If not—it best beseems our worth,
Our name, our right, our lofty birth,
 By noble hands to fall."

XXI.

The helm, to his strong arm consign'd,
Gave the reef'd sail to meet the wind,
 And on her alter'd way,
Fierce bounding, forward sprung the ship
Like greyhound starting from the slip
 To seize his flying prey.
Awaked before the rushing prow
The mimic fires of ocean glow,
 Those lightnings of the wave;
Wild sparkles crest the broken tides,
And, flashing round, the vessel's sides
 With elvish lustre lave,
While, far behind, their livid light
To the dark billows of the night
 A gloomy splendour gave.
It seems as if old Ocean shakes
From his dark brow the lucid flakes
 In envious pageantry,
To match the meteor-light that streaks
 Grim Hecla's midnight sky.

XXII.

Nor lack'd they steadier light to keep
Their course upon the darken'd deep;—
Artornish, on her frowning steep
 'Twixt cloud and ocean hung,
Glanced with a thousand lights of glee,
And landward far, and far to sea,
 Her festal radiance flung.
By that blithe beacon-light they steer'd,
 Whose lustre mingled well
With the pale beam that now appear'd,
As the cold moon her head uprear'd
 Above the eastern fell.

XXIII.

Thus guided, on their course they bore,
Until they near'd the mainland shore,

When frequent on the hollow blast
 Wild shouts of merriment were cast.
 And wind and wave and sea-birds cry
 With wassail sounds in concert vie,
 Like funeral shrieks with revelry,
 Or like the battle-shout
 By peasants heard from cliffs on high,
 When Triumph, Rage, and Agony,
 Madden the fight and rout.
 Now nearer yet, through mist and storm
 Dimly arose the Castle's form,
 And deepen'd shadow made,
 Far lengthen'd on the main below,
 Where, dancing in reflected glow,
 A hundred torches play'd,
 Spangling the wave with lights as vain
 As pleasures in this vale of pain,
 That dazzle as they fade.

XXIV.

Beneath the Castle's sheltering lee,
 They staid their course in quiet sea.
 Hewn in the rock, a passage there
 Sought the dark fortress by a stair,
 So straight, so high, so steep,
 With peasant's staff one valiant hand
 Might well the dizzy pass have mann'd,
 'Gainst hundreds arm'd with spear and brand,
 And plunged them in the deep.
 His bugle then the helmsman wound;
 Loud answer'd every echo round,
 From turret, rock, and bay;
 The postern hinges crash and groan,
 And soon the Warder's cresset shone
 On those rude steps of slippery stone,
 To light the upward way.
 "Thrice welcome, holy Sire!" he said;
 "Full long the spousal train have staid,
 And, vex'd at thy delay,
 Fear'd lest, amidst these wildering seas,
 The darksome night and freshening breeze
 Had driven thy bark astray."

XXV.

"Warder," the younger stranger said,
 "Thine erring guess some mirth had made
 In mirthful hour; but nights like these,
 When the rough winds wake western seas,
 Brook not of glee. We crave some aid
 And needful shelter for this maid
 Until the break of day;
 For to ourselves, the deck's rude plank
 Is easy as the mossy bank
 That's breathed upon by May.

And for our storm-toss'd skiff we seek
 Short shelter in this leeward creek,
 Prompt when the dawn the east shall streak
 Again to bear away."—

Answered the Warder,—“In what name
 Assert ye hospitable claim?

Whence come, or whither bound?
 Hath Erin seen your parting sails,
 Or come ye on Norwayan gales?
 And seek ye England's fertile vales,
 Or Scotland's mountain ground?"—

XXVI.

“Warriors—for other title none
 For some brief space we list to own,
 Bound by a vow—warriors are we;
 In strife by land, and storm by sea,
 We have been known to fame;
 And these brief words have import dear,
 When sounded in a noble ear,
 To harbour safe, and friendly cheer,
 That gives us rightful claim.
 Grant us the trivial boon we seek,
 And we in other realms will speak
 Fair of your courtesy;
 Deny—and be your niggard Hold
 Scorn'd by the noble and the bold,
 Shunn'd by the pilgrim on the wold,
 And wanderer on the lea!"—

XXVII.

“Bold stranger, no—"gainst claim like thine,
 No bolt revolves by hand of mine,
 Though urged in tone that more express'd
 A monarch than a suppliant guest.
 Be what ye will, Artornish Hall
 On this glad eve is free to all.
 Though ye had drawn a hostile sword
 'Gainst our ally, great England's Lord,
 Or mail upon your shoulders borne,
 To battle with the Lord of Lorn,
 Or, outlaw'd, dwelt by greenwood tree
 With the fierce Knight of Ellerslie,^a
 Or aided even the murderous strife,
 When Comyn fell beneath the knife
 Of that fell homicide The Bruce,¹²
 This night had been a term of truce.—
 Ho, vassals! give these guests your care,
 And show the narrow postern stair."

XXVIII.

To land these two bold brethren leapt,
 (The weary crew their vessel kept.)
 And, lighted by the torches' flare,

^a Sir William Wallace.

That seaward flung their smoky glare,
The younger knight that maiden bare
Half lifeless up the rock;
On his strong shoulder lean'd her head,
And down her long dark tresses shed,
As the wild vine, in tendrils spread,
Droops from the mountain oak.
Him follow'd close that elder Lord,
And in his hand a sheathed sword,
Such as few arms could wield;
But when he boun'd him to such task,
Well could it cleave the strongest casque,
And rend the surest shield.

XXIX.

The raised portcullis' arch they pass,
The wicket with its bars of brass,
The entrance long and low,
Flank'd at each turn by loop-holes strait,
Where bowmen might in ambush wait,
(If force or fraud should burst the gate,)
To gall an entering foe.
But every jealous post of ward
Was now defenceless and unbar'd,
And all the passage free
To one low-brow'd and vaulted room,
Where squire and yeoman, page and groom,
Plied their loud revelry.

XXX.

And "Rest ye here," the Warder bade,
"Till to our Lord your suit is said.—
And, comrades, gaze not on the maid,
And on these men who ask our aid,
As if ye ne'er had seen
A damsel tired of midnight bark,
Or wanderers of a moulding stark,
And bearing martial mien."
But not for Eachin's reproof
Would page or vassal stand aloof,
But crowded on to stare,
As men of courtesy untaught
Till fiery Edward roughly caught,
From one the foremost there,
His chequer'd plaid, and in its shroud,
To hide her from the vulgar crowd,
Involved his sister fair.
His brother, as the clansman bent
His sullen brow in discontent,
Made brief and stern excuse;—
"Vassal, were thine the cloak of pall
That decks thy lord in bridal hall,
'Twere honour'd by her use."

XXXI.

Proud was his tone, but calm; his eye
Had that compelling dignity,
His mien that bearing haught and high,
Which common spirits fear!
Needed nor word nor signal more,
Nod, wink, and laughter, all were o'er;
Upon each other back they bore,
And gazed like startled deer.
But now appear'd the Seneschal,
Commission'd by his lord to call
The strangers to the Baron's hall,
Where feasted fair and free
That Island Prince in nuptial tide,
With Edith there his lovely bride,
And her bold brother by her side,
And many a chief, the flower and pride
Of Western land and sea.

Here pause we, gentles, for a space;
And, if our tale hath won your grace,
Grant us brief patience, and again
We will renew the minstrel strain.

CANTO SECOND.

I.

FILL the bright goblet, spread the festive board!
Summon the gay, the noble, and the fair!
Through the loud hall, in joyous concert pour'd,
Let mirth and music sound the dirge of Care!
But ask thou not if Happiness be there,
If the loud laugh disguise convulsive throes,
Or if the brow the heart's true livery wear;
Lift not the festal mask!—enough to know,
No scene of mortal life but teems with mortal woe.

II.

With beakers' clang, with harpers' lay,
With all that olden time deem'd gay,
The Island Chieftain feasted high;
But there was in his troubled eye
A gloomy fire, and on his brow,
Now sudden flush'd, and faded now,
Emotions such as draw their birth
From deeper source than festal mirth.
By fits he paused, and harper's strain
And jester's tale went round in vain,

Or fell but on his idle ear
 Like distant sounds which dreamers hear.
 Then would he rouse him, and employ
 Each art to aid the clamorous joy,
 And call for pledge and lay,
 And, for brief space, of all the crowd,
 As he was loudest of the loud,
 Seem gayest of the gay.

III.

Yet nought amiss the bridal throng
 Mark'd in brief mirth, or musing long;
 The vacant brow, the unlistening ear,
 They gave to thoughts of raptures near,
 And his fierce starts of sudden glee
 Seem'd bursts of bridegroom's ecstasy.
 Nor thus alone misjudged the crowd,
 Since lofty Lorn, suspicious, proud,
 And jealous of his honour'd line,
 And that keen knight, De Argentine,^s
 (From England sent on errand high,
 The western league more firm to tie,)
 Both deem'd in Ronald's mood to find
 A lover's transport-troubled mind.
 But one sad heart, one tearful eye,
 Pierced deeper through the mystery,
 And watch'd, with agony and fear,
 Her wayward bridegroom's varied cheer.

IV.

She watch'd—yet fear'd to meet his glance,
 And he shunn'd hers;—till when by chance
 They met, the point of foeman's lance
 Had given a milder pang!
 Beneath the intolerable smart
 He writhed—then sternly mann'd his heart
 To play his hard but destined part,
 And from the table sprang.
 "Fill me the mighty cup!" he said,
 "Erst own'd by royal Somerled:"^o
 Fill it, till on the studded brim
 In burning gold the bubbles swim,
 And every gem of varied shine
 Glow doubly bright in rosy wine!
 To you, brave lord, and brother mine,
 Of Lorn, this pledge I drink—
 The Union of Our House with thine,
 By this fair bridal-link!"—

V.

"Let it pass round!" quoth He of Lorn,
 "And in good time—that winded horn
 Must of the Abbot tell;
 The laggard monk is come at last."
 Lord Ronald heard the bugle-blast,

And on the floor at random cast,
 The untasted goblet fell.
 But when the Warder in his ear
 Tells other news, his blittler cheer
 Returns like sun of May,
 When through a thunder-cloud it beams!—
 Lord of two hundred isles, he seems
 As glad of brief delay,
 As some poor criminal might feel,
 When, from the gibbet or the wheel,
 Respited for a day.

VI.

"Brother of Lorn," with hurried voice
 He said, "And you, fair lords, rejoice!
 Here, to augment our glee,
 Come wandering knights from far,
 Well proved, they say, in strife,
 And tempest on the sea.
 Ho! give them at your board
 As best their presences may grace,
 And bid them welcome free!"
 With solemn step, and silver wand,
 The Seneschal the presence scann'd
 Of these strange guests; and well he knew
 How to assign their rank its due;
 For though the costly furs
 That erst had deck'd their caps were torn,
 And their gay robes were over-worn,
 And soil'd their gilded spurs,
 Yet such a high commanding grace
 Was in their mien and in their face,
 As suited best the princely dais,^a
 And royal canopy;
 And there he marshall'd them their place,
 First of that company.

VII.

Then lords and ladies spake aside,
 And angry looks the error chide,
 That gave to guests unnamed, unknown,
 A place so near their prince's throne;
 But Owen Erraught said—
 "For forty years a seneschal,
 To marshall guests in bower and hall
 Has been my honour'd trade.
 Worship and birth to me are known,
 By look, by bearing, and by tone,
 Not by furr'd robe or broider'd zone;
 And 'gainst an oaken bough
 I'll gage my silver wand of state,
 That these three strangers oft have sate
 In higher place than now."—

^a *Dais*—the great hall-table—elevated a step or two above the rest of the room.

VIII.

"I, too," the aged Ferrand said,
"Am qualified by minstrel trade
Of rank and place to tell;—
Mark'd ye the younger stranger's eye,
My mates, how quick, how keen, how high,
How fierce its flashes fell,
Glancing among the noble rout
As if to seek the noblest out,
Because the owner might not brook
On any save his peers to look?
And yet it moves me more,
That steady, calm, majestic brow,
With which the elder chief even now
Scann'd the gay presence o'er,
Like being of superior kind,
In whose high-toned impartial mind
Degrees of mortal rank and state
Seem objects of indifferent weight.
The lady too—though, closely tied,
The mantle veil both face and eye,
Her motions' grace it could not hide,
Nor could her form's fair symmetry."

IX.

Suspicious doubt and lordly scorn
Lour'd on the haughty front of Lorn.
From underneath his brows of pride,
The stranger guests he sternly eyed,
And whisper'd closely what the ear
Of Argentine alone might hear;
Then question'd, high and brief,
If, in their voyage, aught they knew
Of the rebellious Scottish crew,
Who to Rath-Erin's shelter drew,
With Carrick's outlaw'd Chief? "—
And if, their winter's exile o'er,
They harbour'd still by Ulster's shore,
Or launch'd their galleys on the main,
To vex their native land again?

X.

That younger stranger, fierce and high,
At once confronts the Chieftain's eye
With look of equal scorn;—
"Of rebels have we nought to show;
But if of royal Bruce thou 'dst know,
I warn thee he has sworn,
Ere thrice three days shall come and go,
His-banner Scottish winds shall blow,
Despite each mean or mighty foe,
From England's every bill and bow,
To Allaster of Lorn."
Kindled the mountain Chieftain's ire,
But Ronald quench'd the rising fire:—

As loudly Ronald calls—"Forbear!
 Not in my sight while brand I wear,
 O'ermatch'd by odds, shall warrior fall,
 Or blood of stranger stain my hall!
 This ancient fortress of my race
 Shall be misfortune's resting-place,
 Shelter and shield of the distress'd,
 No slaughter-house for shipwreck'd guest."—
 "Talk not to me," fierce Lorn replied,
 "Of odds or match!—when Comyn died,
 Three daggers clash'd within his side!
 Talk not to me of sheltering hall—
 The Church of God saw Comyn fall!
 On God's own altar stream'd his blood,
 While o'er my prostrate kinsman stood
 The ruthless murderer—e'en as now—
 With armed hand and scornful brow!—
 Up, all who love me! blow on blow!
 And lay the outlaw'd felons low!"

XVI.

Then up sprang many a mainland Lord,
 Obedient to their Chieftain's word.
 Barcaldine's arm is high in air,
 And Kinloch-Alline's blade is bare,
 Black Murthok's dirk has left its sheath,
 And clench'd is Dermid's hand of death.
 Their mutter'd threats of vengeance swell
 Into a wild and warlike yell;
 Onward they press with weapons high,
 The affrighted females shriek and fly,
 And, Scotland, then thy brightest ray
 Had darken'd ere its noon of day,—
 But every chief of birth and fame,
 That from the Isles of Ocean came,
 At Ronald's side that hour withstood
 Fierce Lorn's relentless thirst for blood.

XVII.

Brave Torquil from Dunvegan high,
 Lord of the misty hills of Skye,
 Mac-Niel, wild Bara's ancient thane,
 Duart, of bold Clan-Gillian's strain,
 Fergus, of Canna's castled bay,
 Mac-Duffith, Lord of Colonsay,
 Soon as they saw the broadswords glance,
 With ready weapons rose at once,
 More prompt, that many an ancient feud,
 Full oft suppress'd, full oft renew'd,
 Glow'd 'twixt the chieftains of Argyle,
 And many a lord of ocean's isle.
 Wild was the scene—each sword was bare,
 Back stream'd each chieftain's shaggy hair.
 In gloomy opposition set,
 Eyes, hands, and brandish'd weapons met;

Blue gleaming o'er the social board,
Flash'd to the torches many a sword;
And soon those bridal lights may shine
On purple blood for rosy wine.

XVIII.

While thus for blows and death prepared,
Each heart was up, each weapon bared,
Each foot advanced,—a surly pause
Still revered hospitable laws.
All menaced violence, but alike
Reluctant each the first to strike,
(For aye accursed in minstrel line
Is he who brawls 'mid song and wine,)
And, match'd in numbers and in might,
Doubtful and desperate seem'd the fight.
Thus threat and murmur died away,
Till on the crowded hall there lay
Such silence, as the deadly still,
Ere bursts the thunder on the hill.
With blade advanced, each Chieftain bold
Show'd like the Sworder's form of old,
As wanting still the torch of life,
To wake the marble into strife.

XIX.

That awful pause the stranger maid,
And Edith, seized to pray for aid.
As to De Argentine she clung,
Away her veil the stranger flung,
And, lovely 'mid her wild despair,
Fast stream'd her eyes, wide flow'd her hair:—
“O thou, of knighthood once the flower,
Sure refuge in distressful hour,
Thou, who in Judah well hast fought
For our dear faith, and oft has sought
Renown in knightly exercise,
When this poor hand has dealt the prize,
Say, can thy soul of honour brook
On the unequal strife to look,
When, butcher'd thus in peaceful hall,
Those once thy friends, my brethren, fall!”
To Argentine she turn'd her word,
But her eye sought the Island Lord.
A flush like evening's setting flame
Glow'd on his cheek; his hardy frame,
As with a brief convulsion, shook:
With hurried voice and eager look,—
“Fear not,” he said, “my Isabel!
What said I—Edith!—all is well—
Nay, fear not—I will well provide
The safety of my lovely bride—
My bride?”—but there the accents clung;
In tremor to his faltering tongue.

XX.

Now rose De Argentine, to claim
 The prisoners in his sovereign's name,
 To England's crown, who, vassals sworn,
 'Gainst their liege lord had weapon borne—
 (Such speech, I ween, was but to hide
 His care their safety to provide;
 For knight more true in thought and deed
 Than Argentine, ne'er spurr'd a steed)—
 And Ronald, who his meaning guess'd,
 Seem'd half to sanction the request.
 This purpose fiery Torquil broke :—
 "Somewhat we've heard of England's yoke,"
 He said, "and, in our islands, Fame
 Hath whisper'd of a lawful claim,
 That calls the Bruce fair Scotland's Lord,
 Though dispossess'd by foreign sword.
 This craves reflection—but though right
 And just the charge of England's Knight,
 Let England's crown her rebels seize
 Where she has power;—in towers like these,
 'Midst Scottish Chieftains summon'd here
 To bridal mirth and bridal cheer,
 Be sure, with no consent of mine,
 Shall either Lorn or Argentine
 With chains or violence, in our sight,
 Oppress a brave and banish'd Knight."

XXI.

Then waked the wild debate again,
 With brawling threat and clamour vain.
 Vassals and menials, thronging in,
 Lent their brute rage to swell the din;
 When, far and wide, a bugle-clang
 From the dark ocean upward rang.
 "The Abbot comes!" they cry at once,
 "The holy man, whose favour'd glance
 Hath sainted visions known;
 Angels have met him on the way,
 Beside the blessed martyr's bay,
 And by Columba's stone.
 His monks have heard their hymnings high
 Sound from the summit of Dun-Y,
 To cheer his penance lone,
 When at each cross, on girth and wold,
 (Their number thrice a hundred-fold,
 His prayer he made, his beads he told,
 With Aves many a one—
 He comes our feuds to reconcile,
 A sainted man from sainted isle;
 We will his holy doom abide,
 The Abbot shall our strife decide."

XXII.

Scarcely this fair accord was o'er,
 When through the wide revolving door

The black-stol'd brethren wind;
 Twelve sandall'd monks, who relics bore,
 With many a torch-bearer before,
 And many a cross behind.
 Then sunk each fierce uplifted hand,
 And dagger bright and flashing brand
 Dropp'd swiftly at the sight;
 They vanish'd from the Churchman's eye,
 As shooting stars, that glance and die,
 Dart from the vault of night.

XXIII.

The Abbot on the threshold stood,
 And in his hand the holy rood;
 Back on his shoulders flow'd his hood,
 The torch's glaring ray
 Show'd in its red and flashing light,
 His wither'd cheek and amice white,
 His blue eye glistening cold and bright,
 His tresses scant and grey.
 "Fair Lords," he said, "Our Lady's love,
 And peace be with you from above,
 And Benedicite!—
 —But what means this?—no peace is here!—
 Do dirks unsheathed suit bridal cheer?
 Or are these naked brands
 A seemly show for Churchman's sight,
 When he comes summon'd to unite
 Betrothed hearts and hands?"

XXIV.

Then, cloaking hate with fiery zeal,
 Proud Lorn first answer'd the appeal;—
 "Thou comest, O holy Man,
 True sons of blessed church to greet,
 But little deeming here to meet
 A wretch, beneath the ban
 Of Pope and Church, for murder done
 Even on the sacred altar-stone—
 Well mayst thou wonder we should know
 Such miscreant here, nor lay him low,
 Or dream of greeting, peace, or truce,
 With excommunicated Bruce!
 Yet well I grant, to end debate,
 Thy sainted voice decide his fate."

XXV.

Then Ronald pled the stranger's cause,
 And knighthood's oath and honour's laws;
 And Isabel, on bended knee,
 Brought pray'rs and tears to back the plea:
 And Edith lent her generous aid,
 And wept, and Lorn for mercy pray'd.
 "Hence," he exclaim'd, "degenerate maid!

Was't not enough, to Ronald's bower
 I brought thee, like a paramour,¹⁴
 Or bond-maid at her master's gate,
 His careless cold approach to wait?—
 But the bold Lord of Cumberland,
 The gallant Clifford, seeks thy hand;
 His it shall be—Nay, no reply!
 Hence! till those rebel eyes be dry.”—
 With grief the Abbot heard and saw,
 Yet nought relax'd his brow of awe.

XXVI.

Then Argentine, in England's name,
 So highly urged his sovereign's claim,
 He waked a spark, that, long suppress'd,
 Had smoulder'd in Lord Ronald's breast;
 And now, as from the flint the fire,
 Flash'd forth at once his generous ire.
 “Enough of noble blood,” he said,
 “By English Edward had been shed,
 Since matchless Wallace first had been
 In mock'ry crown'd with wreaths of green,¹⁵
 And done to death by felon hand,
 For guarding well his father's land.
 Where's Nigel Bruce? and De la Haye,
 And valiant Seton—where are they?
 Where Somerville, the kind and free?
 And Fraser, flower of chivalry?
 Have they not been on gibbet bound,
 Their quarters flung to hawk and hound,
 And hold we here a cold debate,
 To yield more victims to their fate?
 What! can the English Leopard's mood
 Never be gorged with northern blood?
 Was not the life of Athole shed,
 To soothe the tyrant's sicken'd bed:¹⁶
 And must his word, till dying day,
 Be nought but quarter, hang, and slay!—
 Thou frownst, De Argentine,—My gage
 Is prompt to prove the strife I wage.”—

XXVII.

“Nor deem,” said stout Dunvegan's knight,
 “That thou shalt brave alone the fight!
 By saints of isle and mainland both,
 By Woden wild, (my grandsire's oath,)
 Let Rome and England do their worst,
 Howe'er attainted or accursed,
 If Bruce shall e'er find friends again,
 Once more to brave a battle-plain,
 If Douglas couch again his lance,
 Or Randolph dare another chance,
 Old Torquil will not be to lack
 With twice a thousand at his back.—

Nay, chafe not at my bearing bold,
Good Abbot! for thou know'st of old,
Torquil's rude thought and stubborn will
Snack of the wild Norwegian still;
Nor will I barter Freedom's cause
For England's wealth, or Rome's applause."

XXVIII.

The Abbot seem'd with eye severe
The hardy Chieftain's speech to hear;
Then on King Robert turn'd the Monk,
But twice his courage came and sunk,
Confronted with the hero's look;
Twice fell his eye, his accents shook;
At length, resolved in tone and brow,
Sternly he question'd him—"And thou,
Unhappy! what hast thou to plead,
Why I denounce not on thy deed
That awful doom which canons tell
Shuts paradise, and opens hell;
Anathema of power so dread,
It blends the living with the dead,
Bids each good angel soar away,
And every ill one claim his prey;
Expels thee from the church's care,
And deafens Heaven against thy prayer;
Arms every hand against thy life,
Bans all who aid thee in the strife,
Nay, each whose succour, cold and scant,
With meanest alms relieves thy want;
Haunts thee while living,—and, when dead,
Dwells on thy yet devoted head,
Rends Honour's scutcheon from thy hearse,
Stills o'er thy bier the holy verse,
And spurns thy corpse from hallow'd ground
Flung like vile carrion to the hound;
Such is the dire and desperate doom
For sacrilege, decreed by Rome;
And such the well-deserved meed
Of thine unhallow'd, ruthless deed."—

XXIX.

"Abbot!" The Bruce replied, "thy charge
It boots not to dispute at large.
This much, howe'er, I bid thee know,
No selfish vengeance dealt the blow,
For Comyn died his country's foe.
Nor blame I friends whose ill-timed speed
Fulfil'd my soon-repent'd deed,
Nor censure those from whose stern tongue
The dire anathema has rung.
I only blame mine own wild ire,
By Scotland's wrongs incensed to fire.
Heaven knows my purpose to atone,
Far as I may, the evil done,

And hears a penitent's appeal
 From papal curse and prelate's zeal.
 My first and dearest task achieved,
 Fair Scotland from her thrall relieved,
 Shall many a priest in cope and stole
 Say requiem for Red Comyn's soul,
 While I the blessed cross advance,
 And expiate this unhappy chance
 In Palestine, with sword and lance.¹⁷
 But, while content the Church should know
 My conscience owns the debt I owe,
 Unto De Argentine and Lorn
 The name of traitor I return,
 Bid them defiance stern and high,
 And give them in their throats the lie!
 These brief words spoke, I speak no more.
 Do what thou wilt; my shrift is o'er."

XXX.

Like man by prodigy amazed,
 Upon the King the Abbot gazed;
 Then o'er his pallid features glance,
 Convulsions of ecstatic trance.
 His breathing came more thick and fast,
 And from his pale blue eyes were cast
 Strange rays of wild and wandering light;
 Uprise his locks of silver white,
 Flush'd is his brow, through every vein
 In azure tide the currents strain,
 And undistinguish'd accents broke
 The awful silence ere he spoke.

XXXI.

"De Bruce! I rose with purpose dread
 To speak my curse upon thy head,¹⁸
 And give thee as an outcast o'er
 To him who burns to shed thy gore;—
 But, like the Midianite of old,
 Who stood on Zophim, heaven-controll'd,^a
 I feel within mine aged breast
 A power that will not be repress'd.
 It prompts my voice, it swells my veins,
 It burns, it maddens, it constrains!—
 De Bruce, thy sacrilegious blow
 Hath at God's altar slain thy foe:
 O'er-master'd yet by high behest,
 I bless thee, and thou shalt be bless'd!"
 He spoke, and o'er the astonish'd throng
 Was silence, awful, deep, and long.

XXXII.

Again that light has fired his eye,
 Again his form swells bold and high,

^a See the Book of NUMBERS, chap. xxiii. and xxiv.

The broken voice of age is gone,
 'Tis vigorous manhood's lofty tone:—
 "Thrice vanquish'd on the battle-plain,
 Thy followers slaughter'd, fled, or ta'en,
 A hunted wanderer on the wild,
 On foreign shores a man exil'd,¹⁹
 Disown'd, deserted, and distress'd,
 I bless thee, and thou shalt be bless'd!
 Bless'd in the hall and in the field,
 Under the mantle as the shield.
 Avenger of thy country's shame,
 Restorer of her injured fame,
 Bless'd in thy sceptre and thy sword,
 De Bruce, fair Scotland's rightful Lord,
 Bless'd in thy deeds and in thy fame,
 What lengthen'd honours wait thy name!
 In distant ages, sire to son
 Shall tell thy tale of freedom won,
 And teach his infants, in the use
 Of earliest speech, to falter Bruce.
 Go, then, triumphant! sweep along
 Thy course, the theme of many a song!
 The Power, whose dictates swell my breast,
 Hath bless'd thee, and thou shalt be bless'd!—
 Enough—my short-lived strength decays,
 And sinks the momentary blaze.—
 Heaven hath our destined purpose broke,
 Not here must nuptial vow be spoke;
 Brethren, our errand here is o'er,
 Our task discharged—Unmoor, unmoor!"—
 His priests received the exhausted Monk,
 As breathless in their arms he sunk.
 Punctual his orders to obey,
 The train refused all longer stay,
 Embark'd, raised sail, and bore away.

CANTO THIRD.

I.

HAST thou not mark'd, when o'er thy startled head
 Sudden and deep the thunder-peal has roll'd,
 How, when its echoes fell, a silence dead
 Sunk on the wood, the meadow, and the wold?
 The rye-grass shakes not on the sod-built fold,
 The rustling aspen's leaves are mute and still,
 The wall-flower waves not on the ruin'd hold,
 Till, murmuring distant first, then near and shrill,
 The savage whirlwind wakes, and sweeps the groaning hill,

II.

Artornish ! such a silence sunk
 Upon thy halls, when that grey Monk
 His prophet-speech had spoke ;
 And his obedient brethren's sail
 Was stretch'd to meet the southern gale
 Before a whisper woke.
 Then murmuring sounds of doubt and fear,
 Close pour'd in many an anxious ear,
 The solemn stillness broke ;
 And still they gazed with eager guess,
 Where, in an oriel's deep recess,
 The Island Prince seem'd bent to press
 What Lorn, by his impatient cheer,
 And gesture fierce, scarce deign'd to hear.

III.

Starting at length, with frowning look,
 His hand he clench'd, his head he shook,
 And sternly flung apart ;—
 “ And deem'st thou me so mean of mood,
 As to forget the mortal feud,
 And clasp the hand with blood imbrued
 From my dear Kinsman's heart ?
 Is this thy rede ?—a due return
 For ancient league and friendship sworn !
 But well our mountain proverb shows
 The faith of Islesmen ebbs and flows.
 Be it even so—believe, ere long,
 He that now bears shall wreak the wrong.—
 Call Edith—call the Maid of Lorn !
 My sister, slaves !—for further scorn,
 Be sure nor she nor I will stay.—
 Away, De Argentine, away !—
 We nor ally nor brother know,
 In Bruce's friend, or England's foe.”

IV.

But who the Chieftain's rage can tell,
 When, sought from lowest dungeon cell
 To highest tower the castle round,
 No lady Edith was there found !
 He shouted—“ Falsehood !—treachery !—
 Revenge and blood !—a lordly meed
 To him that will avenge the deed !
 A Baron's lands !”—His frantic mood
 Was scarcely by the news withstood,
 That Morag shared his sister's flight,
 And that, in hurry of the night,
 'Scaped noteless, and without remark,
 Two strangers sought the Abbot's bark.—
 “ Man every galley—fly—pursue !
 The priest his treachery shall rue !
 Ay, and the time shall quickly come,
 When we shall hear the thanks that Rome

Will pay his feigned prophecy !"
Such was fierce Lorn's indignant cry;
And Cormac Doil in haste obey'd,
Hoisted his sail, his anchor weigh'd,
(For, glad of each pretext for spoil,
A pirate sworn was Cormac Doil.)
But others, lingering, spoke apart,—
"The Maid has given her maiden heart
To Ronald of the Isles,
And, fearful lest her brother's word
Bestow her on that English Lord,
She seeks Iona's piles,
And wisely deems it best to dwell
A votaress in the holy cell,
Until these feuds so fierce and fell
The Abbot reconciles."

V.

As, impotent of ire, the hall
Echo'd to Lorn's impatient call—
"My horse, my mantle, and my train !
Let none who honours Lorn remain !"—
Courteous, but stern, a bold request
To Bruce De Argentine express'd :—
"Lord Earl," he said,—"I cannot chuse
But yield such title to the Bruce,
Though name and earldom both are gone,
Since he braced rebel's armour on—
But, Earl or Serf—rude phrase was thine
Of late, and launch'd at Argentine;
Such as compels me to demand
Redress of honour at thy hand.
We need not to each other tell,
That both can wield their weapons well;
Then do me but the soldier grace,
This glove upon thy helm to place
Where we may meet in fight;
And I will say, as still I've said
Though by ambition far misled,
Thou art a noble knight."

VI.

"And I," the princely Bruce replied,
"Might term it stain on knighthood's pride,
That the bright sword of Argentine
Should in a tyrant's quarrel shine;
But, for your brave request,
Be sure the honour'd pledge you gave
In every battle-field shall wave
Upon my helmet-crest;
Believe, that if my hasty tongue
Hath done thine honour causeless wrong,
It shall be well redress'd.
Not dearer to my soul was glove,
Bestow'd in youth by lady's love,

Than this which thou hast given!
 Thus, then, my noble foe I greet;
 Health and high fortune till we meet,
 And then—what pleases Heaven.”

VII.

Thus parted they—for now, with sound
 Like waves roll'd back from rocky ground,
 The friends of Lorn retire;
 Each mainland chieftain, with his train,
 Draws to his mountain towers again,
 Pondering how mortal schemes prove vain,
 And mortal hopes expire.
 But through the castle double guard,
 By Ronald's charge, kept wakeful ward,
 Wicket and gate were trebly barr'd,
 By beam and bolt and chain;
 Then of the guests, in courteous sort,
 He pray'd excuse for mirth broke short,
 And bade them in Artornish fort
 In confidence remain.
 Now torch and menial tendance led
 Chieftain and knight to bower and bed,
 And beads were told, and Aves said,
 And soon they sunk away
 Into such sleep as wont to shed
 Oblivion on the weary head,
 After a toilsome day.

VIII.

But soon uproused, the Monarch cried
 To Edward slumbering by his side—
 “Awake, or sleep for aye!
 Even now there jarr'd a secret door—
 A taper-light gleams on the floor—
 Up, Edward! up, I say!
 Some one glides in like midnight ghost—
 Nay, strike not! 'tis our noble Host.”
 Advancing then his taper's flame,
 Ronald stept forth, and with him came
 Dunvegan's chief—each bent the knee
 To Bruce in sign of fealty,
 And proffer'd him his sword,
 And hail'd him, in a monarch's style,
 As king of mainland and of isle,
 And Scotland's rightful lord.
 “And O,” said Ronald, “Own'd of Heaven!
 Say, is my erring youth forgiven,
 By falsehood's arts from duty driven,
 Who rebel falchion drew,
 Yet ever to thy deeds of fame,
 Even while I strove against thy claim,
 Paid homage just and true?”—
 “Alas! dear youth, the unhappy time,”
 Answer'd the Bruce, “must bear the crime,
 Since, guiltier far than you,

Even I"—he paused; for Falkirk's woes
 Upon his conscious soul arose.²⁰
 The Chieftain to his breast he press'd,
 And in a sigh conceal'd the rest.

IX.

They proffer'd aid, by arms and might,
 To repossess him in his right;
 But well their counsels must be weigh'd,
 Ere banners raised and musters made,
 For English hire and Lorn's intrigues
 Bound many chiefs in southern leagues.
 In answer, Bruce his purpose bold
 To his new vassals frankly told:—
 "The winter worn in exile o'er,
 I long'd for Carrick's kindred shore.
 I thought upon my native Ayr,
 And long'd to see the burly fare
 That Clifford makes, whose lordly call
 Now echoes through my father's hall.
 But first my course to Arran led,
 Where valiant Lennox gathers head,
 And on the sea, by tempest toss'd,
 Our barks dispersed, our purpose cross'd,
 Mine own, a hostile sail to shun,
 Far from her destined course had run,
 When that wise will, which masters ours,
 Compell'd us to your friendly towers."

X.

Then Torquill spoke:—"The time craves speed;
 We must not linger in our deed,
 But instant pray our Sovereign Liege,
 To shun the perils of a siege.
 The vengeful Lorn, with all his powers,
 Lies but too near Artornish towers,
 And England's light-arm'd vessels ride,
 Not distant far, the waves of Clyde,
 Prompt at these tidings to unmoor,
 And sweep each strait, and guard each shore.
 Then, till this fresh alarm pass by,
 Secret and safe my Liege must lie
 In the far bounds of friendly Skye,
 Torquill thy pilot and thy guide."—
 "Not so, brave Chieftain," Ronald cried;
 "Myself will on my Sovereign wait,
 And raise in arms the men of Sleate,
 Whilst thou, renown'd where chiefs debate,
 Shalt sway their souls by council sage,
 And awe them by thy locks of age."
 —"And if my words in weight shall fail,
 This ponderous sword shall turn the scale."

XI.

—"The scheme," said Bruce, "contents me well;
 Meantime, 'twere best that Isabel,

For safety, with my bark and crew,
 Again to friendly Erin drew.
 There, Edward, too, shall with her wend,
 In need to cheer her and defend,
 And muster up each scatter'd friend."—
 Here seem'd it as Lord Ronald's ear
 Would other counsel gladlier hear;
 But, all achieved as soon as plann'd,
 Both barks in secret arm'd and mann'd,
 From out the haven bore;
 On different voyage forth they ply,
 This for the coast of winged Skye,
 And that for Erin's shore.

XII.

With Bruce and Ronald bides the tale.—
 To favouring winds they gave the sail,
 Till Mull's dark headlands scarce they knew,
 And Ardnamurchan's hills were blue.
 But then the squalls blew close and hard,
 And, fain to strike the galley's yard,
 And take them to the oar,
 With these rude seas, in weary plight,
 They strove the livelong day and night,
 Nor till the dawning had a sight
 Of Skye's romantic shore.
 Where Coolin stoops to the west,
 They saw upon his shiver'd crest
 The sun's arising gleam;
 But such the labour and delay,
 Ere they were moor'd in Scavigh bay,
 (For calmer heaven compell'd to stay,)
 He shot a western beam.
 Then Ronald said—"If true mine eye,
 These are the savage wilds that lie
 North of Strathnardill and Dunsbye;"¹¹
 No human foot comes here,
 And, since these adverse breezes blow,
 If my good Liege love hunter's bow,
 What hinders that on land we go,
 And strike a mountain-deer?
 Allan, my page, shall with us wend;
 A bow full deftly can he bend,
 And, if we meet a herd may send
 A shaft shall mend our cheer."
 Then each took bow and bolts in hand,
 Their row-boat launch'd, and leapt to land,
 And left their skiff and train,
 Where a wild stream with headlong shock,
 Came brawling down its bed of rock,
 To mingle with the main.

XIII.

A while their route they silent made,
 As men who stalk for mountain-deer,

Till the good Bruce to Ronald said,—
 “Saint Mary! what a scene is here!
 I’ve traversed many a mountain-strand,
 Abroad, and in my native land,
 And it has been my lot to tread
 Where safety more than pleasure led;
 Thus, many a waste I’ve wander’d o’er,
 Clombe many a crag, cross’d many a moor,
 But, by my halidome,
 A scene so rude, so wild as this,
 Yet so sublime in barrenness,
 Ne’er did my wandering footsteps press,
 Where’er I happ’d to roam.”

XIV.

No marvel thus the Monarch spake;
 For rarely human eye has known
 A scene so stern as that dread lake,
 With its dark ledge of barren stone.
 Seems that primeval earthquake’s sway
 Hath rent a strange and shatter’d way
 Through the rude bosom of the hill,
 And that each naked precipice,
 Sable ravine, and dark abyss,
 Tells of the outrage still.
 The wildest glen, but this, can show
 Some touch of Nature’s genial glow;
 On high Benmore green mosses grow,
 And heath-bells bud in deep Glencroe,
 And copse on Cruchan-Ben;
 Bur here,—above, around, below,
 On mountain or in glen,
 Nor tree, nor shrub, nor plant, nor flower,
 Nor ought of vegetative power,
 The weary eye may ken.
 For all is rocks at random thrown,
 Black waves, bare crags, and banks of stone,
 As if were here denied
 The summer sun, the spring’s sweet dew,
 That clothe with many a varied hue
 The bleakest mountain-side.

XV.

And wilder, forward as they wound,
 Were the proud cliffs and lake profound.
 Huge terraces of granite black
 Afforded rude and cumber’d track;
 For from the mountain hoar,
 Hurl’d headlong in some night of fear,
 When yell’d the wolf and fled the deer,
 Loose crags had toppled o’er;
 And some, chance-poised and balanced, lay,
 So that a stripling arm might sway
 A mass no host could raise,

In Nature's rage at random thrown,
 Yet trembling like the Druid's stone
 On its precarious base.
 The evening mists, with ceaseless change,
 Now clothed the mountains' lofty range,
 Now left their foreheads bare,
 And round the skirts their mantle furl'd,
 Or on the sable waters curl'd,
 Or on the eddying breezes whirl'd,
 Dispersed in middle air.
 And oft, condensed, at once thy lower,
 When, brief and fierce, the mountain shower
 Pours like a torrent down,
 And when return the sun's glad beams,
 Whiten'd with foam, a thousand streams
 Leap from the mountain's crown.

XVI.

"This lake," said Bruce, "whose barriers drear
 Are precipices sharp and sheer,
 Yielding no track for goat or deer,
 Save the black shelves we tread,
 How term you its dark waves? and how
 Yon northern mountain's pathless brow,
 And yonder peak of dread,
 That to the evening sun uplifts
 The griesly gulfs and slaty rifts,
 Which seam its shiver'd head?"—

"Coriskin call the dark lake's name,
 Coolin the ridge, as bards proclaim,
 From old Cuchullin, chief of fame.
 But bards, familiar in our isles
 Rather with Nature's frowns than smiles,
 Full oft their careless humours please
 By sportive names from scenes like these.
 I would old Torquil were to show
 His maidens with their breasts of snow,
 Or that my noble Liege were nigh
 To hear his Nurse sing lullaby!
 (The Maids—tall cliffs with breakers white,
 The Nurse—a torrent's roaring might,)
 Or that your eye could see the mood
 Of Corryvrekin's whirlpool rude,
 When dons the Hag her whiten'd hood—
 'Tis thus our islesmen's fancy frames,
 For scenes so stern, fantastic names."

XVII.

Answer'd the Bruce—"And musing mind
 Might here a graver moral find.
 These mighty cliffs, that heave on high
 Their naked brows to middle sky,
 Indifferent to the sun or snow,
 Where nought can fade, and nought can blow,

May they not mark a Monarch's fate,—
Raised high 'mid storms of strife and stata,
Beyond life's lowlier pleasures placed,
His soul a rock, his heart a waste?
O'er hope and love and fear aloft
High rears his crowned head—But soft!
Look, underneath yon jutting crag
Are hunters and a slaughter'd stag.
Who may they be? But late you said
No steps these desert regions tread?"—

XVIII.

"So said I—and believed in sooth,"
Ronald replied, "I spoke the truth.
Yet now I spy, by yonder stone,
Five men—they mark us, and come on;
And by their badge on bonnet borne,
I guess them of the land of Lorn,
Foes to my liege."—"So let it be;
I've faced worse odds than five to three—
—But the poor page can little aid;
Then be our battle thus array'd,
If our free passage they contest;
Cope thou with two, I'll match the rest."—
"Not so, my Liege—for, by my life,
This sword shall meet the treble strife;
My strength, my skill in arms, more small,
And less the loss should Ronald fall.
But islesmen soon to soldiers grow—
Allan has sword as well as bow,
And were my Monarch's orders given,
Two shafts should make our number even."—
"No! not to save my life!" he said;
"Enough of blood rests on my head,
Too rashly spill'd—we soon shall know,
Whether they come as friend or foe."

XIX.

Nigh came the strangers, and more nigh;—
Still less they pleased the Monarch's eye.
Men were they all of evil mien,
Down-look'd, unwilling to be seen;
They moved with half-resolved pace,
And bent on earth each gloomy face.
The foremost two were fair array'd,
With brogue and bonnet, trews and plaid,
And bore the arms of mountaineers,
Daggers and broadswords, bows and spears.
The three, that lagg'd small space behind,
Seem'd serfs of more degraded kind;
Goat-skins or deer-hides o'er them cast,
Made a rude fence against the blast;
Their arms and feet and heads were bare,
Matted their beards, unshorn their hair;

For arms, the caitiffs bore in hand
A club, an axe, a rusty brand.

XX.

Onward still mute, they kept the track;—
“Tell who ye be, or else stand back,”
Said Bruce;—“In deserts when they meet,
Men pass not as in peaceful street.”
Still, at his stern command, they stood,
And proffer’d greeting brief and rude,
But acted courtesy so ill,
As seem’d of fear, and not of will.—
“Wanderers we are, as you may be—
Men hither driven by wind and sea,
Who, if you list to taste our cheer,
Will share with you this fallow deer.”—
“If from the sea, where lies your bark?”—
“Ten fathom deep in ocean dark!
Wreck’d yesternight: but we are men,
Who little sense of peril ken.
The shades come down—the day is shut—
Will you go with us to our hut?”—
“Our vessel waits us in the bay;
Thanks for your proffer—have good-day.”—
“Was that your galley, then, which rode
Not far from shore when evening glow’d?”—
“It was.”—“Then spare your needless pain,
There will she now be sought in vain.
We saw her from the mountain head,
When, with St. George’s blazon red,
A southern vessel bore in sight,
And yours raised sail, and took to flight.”—

XXI.

“Now, by the rood, unwelcome news!”
Thus with Lord Ronald communed Bruce
“Nor rests there light enough to show
If this their tale be true or no.
The men seem bred of churlish kind,
Yet mellow nuts have hardest rind;
We will go with them—food and fire
And sheltering roof our wants require.
Sure guard ’gainst treachery will we keep,
And watch by turns our comrades’ sleep.—
Good fellows, thanks; your guests we’ll be,
And well will pay the courtesy.
Come, lead us where your lodging lies,—
—Nay, soft! we mix not companies.—
Show us the path o’er crag and stone,
And we will follow you;—lead on.”

XXII.

They reach’d the dreary cabin, made
Of sails against a rock display’d,
And there, on entering, found

A slender boy, whose form and mien
Ill suited with such savage scene,
In cap and cloak of velvet green,
Low seated on the ground,
His garb was such as minstrels wear,
Dark was his hue, and dark his hair,
His youthful cheek was marr'd by care,
His eyes in sorrow drown'd.

"Whence this poor boy?"—As Ronald spoke,
The voice his trance of anguish broke;
As if awaked from ghastly dream,
He raised his head with start and scream,
And wildly gazed around;
Then to the wall his face he turn'd,
And his dark neck with blushes burn'd.

XXIII.

"Whose is the boy?" again he said.—
"By chance of war our captive made;
He may be yours, if you should hold
That music has more charms than gold;
For, though from earliest childhood mute,
The lad can deftly touch the lute,
And on the rote and viol play,
And well can drive the time away
For those who love such glee:
For me, the favouring breeze, when loud
It pipes upon the galley's shroud,
Makes blither melody."—

"Hath he, then, sense of spoken sound?"—
"Aye; so his mother bade us know,
A crone in our late shipwreck drown'd,
And hence the silly stripling's woe.
More of the youth I cannot say,
Our captive but since yesterday;
When wind and weather wax'd so grim,
We little listed think of him.—
But why waste time in idle words?
Sit to your cheer—unbelt your swords."
Sudden the captive turn'd his head,
And one quick glance to Ronald sped.
It was a keen and warning look,
And well the Chief the signal took.

XXIV.

"Kind host," he said, "our needs require
A separate board and separate fire;
For know, that on a pilgrimage
Wend I, my comrade, and this page.
And, sworn to vigil and to fast,
Long as this hallow'd task shall last,
We never doff the plaid or sword,
Or feast us at a stranger's board;
And never share one common sleep,
But one must still his vigil keep.

Thus, for our separate use, good friend,
We'll hold this hut's remoter end."—
"A churlish vow," the elder said,
"And hard, methinks, to be obey'd.
How say you, if, to wreak the scorn
That pays our kindness harsh return,
We should refuse to share our meal?"—
"Then say we, that our swords are steel!
And our vow binds us not to fast,
Where gold or force may buy repast."—
Their host's dark brow grew keen and fell,
His teeth are clench'd, his features swell;
Yet sunk the felon's moody ire
Before Lord Ronald's glance of fire,
Nor could his craven courage brook
The monarch's calm and dauntless look.
With laugh constrain'd—"Let every man
Follow the fashion of his clan!
Each to his separate quarters keep,
And feed or fast, or wake or sleep."

XXV.

Their fire at separate distance burns,
By turns they eat, keep guard by turns,
For evil seem'd that old man's eye,
Dark and designing, fierce yet shy.
Still he avoided forward look,
But slow, and circumspectly took
A circling, never-ceasing glance,
By doubt and cunning mark'd at once,
Which shot a mischief-boding ray,
From under eyebrows shagg'd and grey.
The younger, too, who seem'd his son,
Had that dark look the timid shun;
The half-clad serfs behind them sate,
And scowl'd a glare 'twixt fear and hate—
Till all, as darkness onward crept,
Couch'd down, and seem'd to sleep, or slept.
Nor he, that boy, whose powerless tongue
Must trust his eyes to wail his wrong,
A longer watch of sorrow made,
But stretch'd his limbs to slumber laid.

XXVI.

Not in his dangerous host confides
The King, but wary watch provides.
Ronald keeps ward till midnight past,
Then wakes the King, young Allan last;
Thus rank'd, to give the youthful page
The rest required by tender age.
What is Lord Ronald's wakeful thought,
To chase the languor toil had brought?
(For deem not that he deign'd to throw
Much care upon such coward foe.)—

He thinks of lovely Isabel,
When at her foeman's feet she fell,
Nor less when, placed in princely selle,
She glanced on him with favouring eyes,
At Woodstocke when he won the prize.
Nor, fair in joy, in sorrow fair,
In pride of place as 'mid despair,
Must she alone engross his care.
His thoughts to his betrothed bride,
To Edith, turn—O how decide,
When here his love and heart are given,
And there his faith stands plight to Heaven
No drowsy ward 'tis his to keep,
For seldom lovers long for sleep.
Till sung his midnight hymn the owl,
Answer'd the dog-fox with his howl,
Then waked the King—at his request,
Lord Ronald stretch'd himself to rest.

XXVII.

What spell was good King Robert's, say,
To drive the weary night away?
His was the patriot's burning thought,
Of Freedom's battle bravely fought,
Of Castles storm'd, of cities freed,
Of deep design and daring deed,
Of England's roses reft and torn,
And Scotland's cross in triumph worn,
Of rout and rally, war and truce,—
As heroes think, so thought the Bruce.
No marvel, 'mid such musings high,
Sleep shunn'd the Monarch's thoughtful eye.—
Now over Coolin's eastern head
The greyish light begins to spread,
The otter to his cavern drew,
And clamour'd shrill the wakening mew;
Then watch'd the page—to needful rest
The King resign'd his anxious breast.

XXVIII.

To Allan's eyes was harder task,
The weary watch their safeties ask.
He trimm'd the fire, and gave to shine
With bickering light the splinter'd pine;
Then gazed awhile, where silent laid
Their hosts were shrouded by the plaid.
But little fear waked in his mind,
For he was bred of martial kind,
And, if to manhood he arrive,
May match the boldest knight alive.
Then thought he of his mother's tower,
His little sisters' greenwood bower,
How there the Easter-gambols pass,
And of Dan Joseph's lengthen'd mass.

But still, before his weary eye,
 In rays prolong'd, the blazes die;—
 Again he roused him—on the lake
 Look'd forth, where now the twilight flake
 Of pale cold dawn began to wake.
 On Coolin's cliffs the mist lay furl'd,
 The morning breeze the lake had curl'd,
 The short dark waves, heaved to the land,
 With ceaseless plash kiss'd cliff or sand;—
 It was a slumbrous sound—he turn'd
 To tales at which his youth had burn'd,
 Of pilgrim's path by demon cross'd,
 Of sprightly elf or yelling ghost,
 Of the wild witch's baneful cot,
 And mermaid's alabaster grot,
 Who bathes her limbs in sunless well,
 Deep in Strathaird's enchanted cell.²²
 Thither in fancy rapt he flies.
 And on his sight the vaults arise;
 That hut's dark walls he sees no more,
 His foot is on the marble floor,
 And o'er his head the dazzling spars
 Gleam like a firmament of stars!
 —Hark! hears he not the sea-nymph speak
 Her anger in that thrilling shriek?—
 No!—all too late, with Allan's dream
 Mingled the captive's warning scream.
 As from the ground he strives to start,
 A ruffian's dagger finds his heart!
 Upwards he casts his dizzy eyes, . . .
 Murmurs his master's name, . . . and dies!

XXIX.

Not so awoke the King! his hand
 Snatch'd from the flame a knotted brand,
 The nearest weapon of his wrath;
 With this he cross'd the murderer's path,
 And venged young Allan well!
 The spatter'd brain and bubbling blood
 Hiss'd on the half-extinguish'd wood—
 The miscreant gasp'd and fell!
 Nor rose in peace the Island Lord;
 One caitiff died upon his sword,
 And one beneath his grasp lies prone,
 In mortal grapple overthrown.
 But while Lord Ronald's dagger drank
 The life-blood from his panting flank,
 The Father-ruffian of the band
 Behind him rears a coward hand!
 —O for a moment's aid,
 Till Bruce, who deals no double blow,
 Dash to the earth another foe,
 Above his comrade laid!—
 And it is gain'd—the captive sprung

On the raised arm and closely clung,
And, ere he shook him loose,
The master'd felon press'd the ground,
And gasp'd beneath a mortal wound,
While o'er him stands the Bruce.

XXX.

"Miscreant! while lasts thy flitting spark,
Give me to know the purpose dark,
That arm'd thy hand with murderous knife,
Against offenceless stranger's life?"—
"No stranger thou!" with accent fell,
Murmur'd the wretch; "I know thee well;
And know thee for the foeman sworn
Of my high Chief, the mighty Lorn."—
"Speak yet again, and speak the truth
For thy soul's sake!—from whence this youth
His country, birth, and name declare,
And thus one evil deed repair,"—
—"Vex me no more! . . . my blood runs cold;
No more I know than I have told.
We found him in a bark we sought
With different purpose . . . and I thought" . . .
Fate cut him short; in blood and broil,
As he had lived, died Cormac Doil.

XXXI.

Then resting on his bloody blade,
The valiant Bruce to Ronald said—
"Now shame upon us both!—that boy
Lifts his mute face to heaven,
And clasps his hands, to testify
His gratitude to God on high,
For strange deliverance given.
His speechless gesture thanks hath paid,
Which our free tongues have left unsaid!"
He raised the youth with kindly word,
But mark'd him shudder at the sword:
He cleansed it from its hue of death,
And plunged the weapon in its sheath.
"Alas, poor child! unfitting part
Fate doom'd, when with so soft a heart,
And form so slight as thine,
She made thee first a pirate's slave,
Then, in his stead, a patron gave
Of wayward lot like mine—
A landless prince, whose wandering life
Is but one scene of blood and strife;
Yet scant of friends the Bruce shall be,
But he'll find resting-place for thee.—
Come, noble Ronald! o'er the dead
Enough thy generous grief is paid,
And well has Allan's fate been wroke;
Come wend we hence—the day has broke.

Seek we our bark—I trust the tale
Was false, that she had hoisted sail."

XXXII.

Yet, ere they left that charnel-cell,
The Island Lord bade sad farewell
To Allan:—"Who shall tell this tale,"
He said, "in halls of Donagaile!
Oh, who his widow'd mother tell,
That, ere his bloom, her fairest fell:—
Rest thee, poor youth! and trust my care
For mass and knell and funeral prayer;
While o'er those caitiffs where they lie,
The wolf shall snarl, the raven cry!"—
And now the eastern mountain's head
On the dark lake threw lustre red;
Bright gleams of gold and purple streak
Ravine and precipice and peak—
(So earthly power at distance shows—
Reveals his splendour, hides his woes.)
O'er sheets of granite, dark and broad,
Rent and unequal, lay the road.
In sad discourse the warriors wind,
And the mute captive moves behind.

CANTO FOURTH

I.

STRANGER! if e'er thine ardent step hath traced
The northern realms of ancient Caledon,
Where the proud Queen of Wilderness hath placed,
By lake and cataract, her lonely throne;
Sublime but sad delight thy soul hath known,
Gazing on pathless glen and mountain high,
Listing where from the cliffs the torrents thrown
Mingle their echoes with the eagle's cry,
And with the sounding lake, and with the moaning sky.

Yes! 'twas sublime, but sad.—The loneliness
Loaded thy heart, the desert tired thine eye;
And strange and awful fears began to press
Thy bosom with a stern solemnity.
Then hast thou wish'd some woodman's cottage nigh,
Something that show'd of life, though low and mean;
Glad sight, its curling wreath of smoke to spy—
Glad sound, its cock's blithe carol would have been,
Or children whooping wild beneath the willows green.

Such are the scenes, where savage grandeur wakes
 An awful thrill that softens into sighs;
 Such feelings rouse them by dim Rannoch's lakes,
 In dark Glencoe such gloomy raptures rise:
 Or farther, where, beneath the northern skies,
 Chides wild Loch-Eribol his caverns hoar—
 But, be the minstrel judge, they yield the prize
 Of desert dignity to that dread shore,
 That sees grim Coolin rise, and hears Coriskin roar.

II.

Through such wild scenes the champion pass'd,
 When bold halloo and bugle-blast
 Upon the breeze came loud and fast.
 "There," said the Bruce, "rung Edward's horn;
 What can have caused such brief return?
 And see, brave Ronald,—see him dart
 O'er stock and stone like hunted hart,
 Precipitate, as is the use,
 In war or sport, of Edward Bruce.
 —He marks us, and his eager cry
 Will tell his news ere he be nigh."

III.

Loud Edward shouts—"What make ye here.
 Warring upon the mountain-deer,
 When Scotland wants her King?
 A bark from Lennox cross'd our track,
 With her in speed I hurried back,
 These joyful news to bring—
 The Stuart stirs in Teviotdale,
 And Douglas wakes his native vale;
 Thy storm-toss'd fleet hath won its way
 With little loss to Brodick-Bay,
 And Lennox, with a gallant band,
 Waits but thy coming and command
 To waft them o'er to Carrick strand.
 There are blithe news!—but mark the close!
 Edward, the deadliest of our foes,
 As with his host he northward pass'd,
 Hath on the borders breathed his last."

IV.

Still stood the Bruce—his steady cheek
 Was little wont his joy to speak,
 But then his colour rose:—
 "Now, Scotland! shortly shalt thou see,
 With God's high will, thy children free,
 And vengeance on thy foes!
 Yet to no sense of selfish wrongs,
 Bear witness with me, Heaven, belongs
 My joy o'er Edward's bier;²³
 I took my knighthood at his hand,
 And lordship held of him, and land,
 And well may vouch it here,

That, blot the story from his page,
 Of Scotland ruin'd in his rage,
 You read a monarch brave and sage,
 And to his people dear."—
 "Let London's burghers mourn her Lord,
 And Croydon monks his praise record,"
 The eager Edward said;
 "Eternal as his own, my hate
 Surmounts the bounds of mortal fate,
 And dies not with the dead!
 Such hate was his on Solway's strand,
 When vengeance clench'd his palsied hand,
 That pointed yet to Scotland's land,
 As his last accents pray'd
 Disgrace and curse upon his heir,
 If he one Scottish head should spare,
 Till stretch'd upon the bloody lair
 Each rebel corpse was laid!
 Such hate was his, when his last breath
 Renounced the peaceful house of death,
 And bade his bones to Scotland's coast
 Be borne by his remorseless host,
 As if his dead and stony eye
 Could still enjoy her misery!
 Such hate was his—dark, deadly, long;
 Mine,—as enduring, deep, and strong!"—

V.

"Let women, Edward, war with words,
 With curses monks, but men with swords;
 Nor doubt of living foes to sate.
 Deepest revenge and deadliest hate.—
 Now to the sea! Behold the beach,
 And see the galley's pendants stretch
 Their fluttering length down favouring gale!
 Aboard, aboard! and hoist the sail!
 Hold we our way for Arran first,
 Where meet in arms our friends dispersed—
 Lennox the loyal, De la Haye,
 And Boyd the bold in battle fray.
 I long the hardy band to head,
 And see once more my standard spread.—
 Does noble Ronald share our course,
 Or stay to raise his island force?"—
 "Come weal, come woe, by Bruce's side,"
 Replied the Chief, "will Ronald bide.
 And since two galleys yonder ride,
 Be mine, so please my liege, dismiss'd,
 To wake to arms the clans of Uist,
 And all who hear the Minche's roar,
 On the Long Island's lonely shore.
 The nearer Isles, with slight delay,
 Ourselves may summon in our way;
 And soon on Arran's shore shall meet,
 With Torquil's aid, a gallant fleet.

If aught avails their Chieftain's hest
Among the islesmen of the west."

VI.

Thus was their venturous council said.
But, ere their sails the galley spread,
Coriskin dark and Coolin high
Echoed the dirge's doleful cry.
Along that sable lake pass'd slow,—
Fit scene for such a sight of woe,—
The sorrowing islesmen, as they bore
The murder'd Allan to the shore.
At every pause, with dismal shout,
Their coronach of grief rung out,
And ever, when they moved again,
The pipes resumed their clamorous strain,
And with the pibroch's shrilling wail,
Mourn'd the young heir of Donagaile.
Round and around from cliff and cave,
His answer stern old Coolin gave,
Till high upon his misty side
Languish'd the mournful notes, and died.
For never sounds, by mortal made,
Attain'd his high and haggard head,
That echoes but the tempest's moan,
Or the deep thunder's rending groan.

VII.

Merrily, merrily bounds the bark
She bounds before the gale,
The mountain breeze from Ben-na-darch
Is joyous in her sail !
With fluttering sound like laughter hoarse,
The cords and canvass strain,
The waves, divided by her force,
In rippling eddies chased her course,
As if they laugh'd again.
Not down the breeze more blithely flew,
Skimming the wave, the light sea-mew,
Than the gay galley bore
Her course upon that favouring wind,
And Coolin's crest has sunk behind,
And Slapin's cavern'd shore.
'T was then that warlike signals wake
Dunscath's dark towers and Eisord's lake,
And soon, from Cavilgarrigh's head,
Thick wreaths of eddying smoke were spread—
A summons these of war and wrath
To the brave clans of Sleat and Strath—
And, ready at the sight,
Each warrior to his weapon sprung,
And targe upon his shoulder hung,
Impatient for the fight.
Mac-Kinnon's chief, in warfare grey,

Had charge to muster their array,
And guide their barks to Brodick-Bay.

VIII.

Signal of Ronald's high command,
A beacon gleam'd o'er sea and land,
From Canna's tower, that, steep and grey,
Like falcon-nest o'erhangs the bay.
Seek not the giddy crag to climb,
To view the turret scathed by time;
It is a task of doubt and fear
To aught but goat or mountain-deer.
But rest thee on the silver beach,
And let the aged herdsman teach
His tale of former day;
His cur's wild clamour he shall chide,
And for thy seat by ocean's side,
His varied plaid display;
Then tell, how with their Chieftain came,
In ancient times, a foreign dame
To yonder turret grey.
Stern was her Lord's suspicious mind,
Who in so rude a jail confined
So soft and fair a thrall!
And oft, when moon on ocean slept,
That lovely lady sate and wept
Upon the castle-wall,
And turn'd her eye to southern climes,
And thought perchance of happier times,
And touch'd her lute by fits, and sung
Wild ditties in her native tongue.
And still, when on the cliff and bay
Placid and pale the moonbeams play,
And every breeze is mute,
Upon the lone Hebridean's ear
Steals a strange pleasure mix'd with fear;
While from that cliff he seems to hear
The murmur of a lute,
And sounds, as of a captive lone,
That mourns her woes in tongue unknown.—
Strange is the tale—but all too long
Already hath it staid the song—
Yet who may pass them by,
That crag and tower in ruins grey,
Nor to their hapless tenant pay
The tribute of a sigh!

IX.

Merrily, merrily bounds the bark
O'er the broad ocean driven,
Her path by Ronin's mountains dark
The steersman's hand hath given.
And Ronin's mountains dark have sent
Their hunters to the shore,²⁴

And each his ashen bow unbent,
And gave his pastime o'er,
And at the Island Lord's command,
For hunting spear took warrior's brand.
On Scoreigg next a warning light
Summon'd her warriors to the fight;
A numerous race, ere stern MacLeod
O'er their bleak shores in vengeance strode,²⁵
When all in vain the ocean-cave
Its refuge to his victims gave.
The Chief, relentless in his wrath,
With blazing heath blocades the path;
In dense and stifling volumes roll'd,
The vapour fill'd the cavern'd hold!
The warrior-threat, the infant's plain,
The mother's screams, were heard in vain;
The vengeful Chief maintains his fires,
Till in the vault a tribe expires!
The bones which strew that cavern's gloom,
Too well attest their dismal doom.

X.

Merrily, merrily goes the bark
On a breeze from the northward free;
So shoots through the morning sky the lark,
Or the swan through the summer sea.
The shores of Mull on the eastward lay,
And Ulva dark, and Colonsay,
And all the group of islets gay
That guard famed Staffa round.
Then all unknown its columns rose,
Where dark and undisturb'd repose
The cormorant had found,
And the shy seal had quiet home,
And welter'd in that wondrous dome,
Where, as to shame the temples deck'd
By skill of earthly architect,
Nature herself, it seem'd, would raise
A Minster to her Maker's praise!
Not for a meaner use ascend
Her columns, or her arches bend;
Nor of a theme less solemn tells
That mighty surge that ebbs and swells,
And still, between each awful pause,
From the high vault an answer draws,
In varied tone prolong'd and high,
That mocks the organ's melody.
Nor doth its entrance front in vain
To old Iona's holy fane,
That Nature's voice might seem to say,
"Well hast thou done, frail Child of clay!
Thy humble powers that stately shrine
Task'd high and hard—but witness mine!"

XI.

Merrily, merrily goes the bark—
 Before the gale she bounds ;
 So darts the dolphin from the shark,
 Or the deer before the hounds.
 They left Loch-Tua on their lee,
 And they waken'd the men of the wild Tiree,
 And the Chief of the sandy Coll ;
 They paused not at Columba's isle,
 Though peal'd the bells from the holy pile
 With long and measured toll ;
 No time for matin or for mass,
 And the sounds of the holy summons pass
 Away in the billows' roll.
 Lochbuie's fierce and warlike Lord
 Their signal saw, and grasp'd his sword,
 And verdant Islay call'd her host,
 And the clans of Jura's rugged coast
 Lord Ronald's call obey,
 And Scarba's isle, whose tortured shore
 Still rings to Corrievreken's roar,
 And lonely Colonsay ;
 —Scenes sung by him who sings no more.²²
 His bright and brief career is o'er,
 And mute his tuneful strains ;
 Quench'd is his lamp of varied lore,
 That loved the light of song to pour ;—
 A distant and a deadly shore
 Has LEYDEN's cold remains !

XII.

Ever the breeze blows merrily,
 But the galley ploughs no more the sea.
 Lest, rounding wild Cantyre, they meet
 The southern foeman's watchful fleet,
 They held unwonted way ;—
 Up Tarbat's western lake they bore,
 Then dragg'd their bark the isthmus o'er.²³
 As far as Kilmaconnel's shore,
 Upon the eastern bay.
 It was a wondrous sight to see
 Topmast and pennon glitter free,
 High raised above the greenwood tree,
 As on dry land the galley moves,
 By cliff and copse and alder groves.
 Deep import from that selcouth sign.
 Did many a mountain Seer divine ;
 For ancient legends told the Gael,
 That when a royal bark should sail
 O'er Kilmaconnel moss,
 Old Albyn should in fight prevail,
 And every foe should faint and quail
 Before her silver Cross.

XIII.

Now launched once more, the inland sea
 They furrow with fair augury,
 And steer for Arran's isle;
 The sun, ere yet he sunk behind
 Ben-Ghoil, "the Mountain of the Wind,"
 Gave his grim peaks a greeting kind,
 And bade Loch Ranza smile.²⁸
 Thither their destined course they drew:
 It seem'd the isle her monarch knew,
 So brilliant was the landward view,
 The ocean so serene;
 Each puny wave in diamonds roll'd
 O'er the calm deep, where hues of gold
 With azure strove and green.
 The hill, the vale, the tree, the tower,
 Glow'd with the tints of evening's hour,
 The beech was silver sheen,
 The wind breathed soft as lover's sigh,
 And, oft renew'd, seem'd oft to die,
 With breathless pause between.
 O who, with speech of war and woes,
 Would wish to break the soft repose
 Of such enchanting scene!

XIV.

Is it of war Lord Ronald speaks?—
 The blush that dyes his manly cheeks,
 The timid look and downcast eye,
 And faltering voice, the theme deny.
 And good King Robert's brow express'd
 He ponder'd o'er some high request,
 As doubtful to approve;
 Yet in his eye and lip the while,
 Dwelt the half-pitying glance and smile,
 Which manhood's graver mood beguile,
 When lovers talk of love.
 Anxious his suit Lord Ronald pled;
 —"And for my bride betrothed," he said.
 "My Liege has heard the rumour spread
 Of Edith from Artornish fled.
 Too hard her fate—I claim no right
 To blame her for her hasty flight;
 Be joy and happiness her lot!—
 But she hath fled the bridal-knot,
 And Lorn recall'd his promised plight,
 In the assembled chieftains' sight.—
 When, to fulfil our fathers' band,
 I proffer'd all I could—my hand—
 I was repulsed with scorn;
 Mine honour I should ill assert,
 And worse the feelings of my heart
 If I should play a suitor's part
 Again, to pleasure Lorn."—

XV.

"Young Lord," the Royal Bruce replied,
 "That question must the Church decide;
 Yet seems it hard, since rumours state
 Edith takes Clifford for her mate,
 The very tie, which she hath broke,
 To thee should still be binding yoke.
 But, for my sister Isabel—
 The mood of woman who can tell?
 I guess the Champion of the Rock,
 Victorious in the tourney shock,
 That knight unknown, to whom the prize
 She dealt,—had favour in her eyes;
 But since our brother Nigel's fate,
 Our ruin'd house and hapless state,
 From worldly joy and hope estranged,
 Much is the hapless mourner changed.
 Perchance," here smiled the noble King,
 "This tale may other musings bring.
 Soon shall we know—yon mountains hide
 The little convent of Saint Bride;
 There, sent by Edward, she must stay,
 Till fate shall give more prosperous day;
 And thither will I bear thy suit,
 Nor will thine advocate be mute."

XVI.

As thus they talk'd in earnest mood,
 That speechless boy beside them stood.
 He stoop'd his head against the mast,
 And bitter sobs came thick and fast,
 A grief that would not be repress'd,
 But seem'd to burst his youthful breast.
 His hands, against his forehead held,
 As if by force his tears repell'd,
 But through his fingers, long and slight,
 Fast trill'd the drops of crystal bright.
 Edward, who walk'd the deck apart,
 First spied this conflict of the heart.
 Thoughtless as brave, with bluntness kind
 He sought to cheer the sorrower's mind;
 By force the slender hand he drew
 From those poor eyes that stream'd with dew.
 As in his hold the stripling strove,—
 ("I was a rough grasp, though meant in love,)
 Away his tears the warrior swept,
 And bade shame on him that he wept.
 "I would to heaven, thy helpless tongue
 Could tell me who hath wrought thee wrong;
 For, were he of our crew the best,
 The insult went not unredress'd.
 Come, cheer thee!—thou art now of age
 To be a warrior's gallant page;
 Thou shalt be mine!—a palfrey fair
 O'er hill andholt my boy shall bear,

To hold my bow in hunting grove,
Or speed on errand to my love;
For well I wot thou wilt not tell
The temple where my wishes dwell."

XVII.

Bruce interposed,— "Gay Edward, no,
This is no youth to hold thy bow,
To fill thy goblet, or to bear
Thy message light to lighter fair.
Thou art a patron all too wild
And thoughtless, for this orphan child.
See'st thou not how apart he steals,
Keeps lonely couch, and lonely meals?
Fitter by far in yon calm cell
To tend our sister Isabel,
With father Augustine to share
The peaceful change of convent prayer,
Than wander wild adventures through,
With such a reckless guide as you."—
"Thanks, brother!" Edward answer'd gay,
"For the high laud thy words convey!
But we may learn some future day,
If thou or I can this poor boy
Protect the best, or best employ.
Meanwhile, our vessel nears the strand;
Launch we the boat, and seek the land."

XVIII.

To land King Robert lightly sprung,
And thrice aloud his bugle rung
With note prolong'd and varied strain,
Till bold Ben-Ghoil replied again.
Good Douglas then, and De la Haye,
Had in a glen a hart at bay,
And Lennox cheer'd the laggard hounds,
When waked that horn the greenwood bounds,
"It is the foe!" cried Boyd, who came
In breathless haste with eye of flame,—
"It is the foe!—Each valiant lord
Fling by his bow, and grasp his sword!"—
"Not so," replied the good Lord James,
"That blast no English bugle claims.
Oft have I heard it fire the fight,
Cheer the pursuit, or stop the flight.
Dead were my heart, and deaf mine ear,
If Bruce should call, nor Douglas hear!
Each to Loch Ranza's margin spring;
That blast was winded by the King!"

XIX.

Fast to their mates the tidings spread,
And fast to shore the warriors sped.
Bursting from glen and greenwood tree,
High waked their loyal jubilee!

Around the royal Bruce they crowd,
 And clasp'd his hands, and wept aloud.
 Veterans of early fields were there,
 Whose helmets press'd their hoary hair,
 Whose swords and axes bore a stain
 From life-blood of the red-hair'd Dane;
 And boys, whose hands scarce brook'd to wield
 The heavy sword or bossy shield.
 Men too were there, that bore the scars
 Impress'd in Albyn's woful wars,
 At Falkirk's fierce and fatal fight,
 Teyndrum's dread rout, and Methven's flight
 The might of Douglas there was seen,
 There Lennox with his graceful mien;
 Kirkpatrick, Closeburn's dreaded Knight;
 The Lindsay, fiery, fierce, and light;
 The Heir of murder'd De la Haye,
 And Boyd the grave, and Seton gay.
 Around their King regain'd they press'd,
 Wept, shouted, clasp'd him to their breast,
 And young and old, and serf and lord,
 And he who ne'er unsheathed a sword,
 And he in many a peril tried,
 Alike resolved the brunt to bide,
 And live or die by Bruce's side!

XX.

Oh, War! thou hast thy fierce delight,
 Thy gleams of joy, intensely bright!
 Such gleams, as from thy polish'd shield
 Fly dazzling o'er the battle-field!
 Such transports wake, severe and high,
 Amid the pealing conquest cry;
 Scarce less, when, after battle lost,
 Muster the remnants of a host,
 And as each comrade's name they tell,
 Who in the well-fought conflict fell,
 Knitting stern brow o'er flashing eye,
 Vow to avenge them or to die!—
 Warriors!—and where are warriors found,
 If not on martial Britain's ground?
 And who, when waked with note of fire,
 Love more than they the British lyre?—
 Know ye not,—hearts to honour dear!
 That joy, deep-thrilling, stern, severe,
 At which the heartstrings vibrate high,
 And wake the fountains of the eye?
 And blame ye, then, the Bruce, if trace
 Of tear is on his manly face,
 When, scanty relics of the train
 That hail'd at Scone his early reign,
 This patriot band around him hung,
 And to his knees and bosom clung?—
 Blame ye the Bruce?—His brother blamed,
 But shared the weakness, while ashamed.

With haughty laugh his head he turn'd,
And dash'd away the tear he scorn'd.³⁰

XXI.

'Tis morning, and the Convent bell
Long time had ceased its matin knell,
Within thy walls, Saint Bride!
An aged Sister sought the cell
Assign'd to Lady Isabel,

And hurriedly she cried,
"Haste, gentle Lady, haste!—there waits
A noble stranger at the gates;
Saint Bride's poor vot'ress ne'er has seen
A Knight of such a princely mien;
His errand, as he bade me tell,
Is with the Lady Isabel."

The princess rose,—for on her knee
Low bent she told her rosary,—

"Let him by thee his purpose teach:
I may not give a stranger speech."—

"Saint Bride forefend, thou royal Maid!"
The portress cross'd herself, and said;—

"Not to be Prioress might I
Debate his will, his suit deny."—

"Has earthly show, then, simple fool,
Power o'er a sister of thy rule?
And art thou, like the worldly train,
Subdued by splendours light and vain?"—

XXII.

"No, Lady! in old eyes like mine,
Gauds have no glitter, gems no shine;
Nor grace his rank attendants vain,
One youthful page is all his train.
It is the form, the eye, the word,
The bearing of that stranger Lord;
His stature, manly, bold, and tall,
Built like a castle's battled wall,
Yet moulded in such just degrees,
His giant-strength seems lightsome ease.
Close as the tendrils of the vine,
His locks upon his forehead twine,
Jet-black, save where some touch of grey
Has ta'en the youthful hue away.

Weather and war their rougher trace
Have left on that majestic face;—

But 'tis his dignity of eye!

There, if a suppliant, would I fly,
Secure, 'mid danger, wrongs, and grief,
Of sympathy, redress, relief—

That glance, if guilty, would I dread
More than the doom that spoke me dead!"—

"Enough, enough," the Princess cried,

"'Tis Scotland's hope, her joy, her pride!

To meaner front was ne'er assign'd
 Such mastery o'er the common mind—
 Bestow'd thy high designs to aid,
 How long, O Heaven! how long delay'd!—
 Haste, Mona, haste, to introduce
 My darling brother, royal Bruce!”

XXIII.

They met like friends who part in pain,
 And meet in doubtful hope again.
 But when subdued that fitful swell,
 The Bruce survey'd the humble cell;—
 “And this is thine, poor Isabel!—
 That pallet-couch, and naked wall,
 For room of state, and bed of pail;
 For costly robes and jewels rare,
 A string of beads and zone of hair;
 And for the trumpet's sprightly call
 To sport or banquet, grove or hall,
 The bell's grim voice divides thy care,
 Twixt hours of penitence and prayer!—
 O ill for thee, my royal claim
 From the First David's sainted name!
 O woe for thee, that while he sought
 His right, thy brother feebly fought!”—

XXIV.

“Now lay these vain regrets aside,
 And be the unshaken Bruce!” she cried.
 “For more I glory to have shared
 The woes thy venturous spirit dared,
 When raising first thy valiant band
 In rescue of thy native land,
 Than had fair Fortune set me down
 The partner of an empire's crown.
 And grieve not that on Pleasure's stream
 No more I drive in giddy dream,
 For Heaven the erring pilot knew,
 And from the gulf the vessel drew,
 Tried me with judgments stern and great,—
 My house's ruin, thy defeat,
 Poor Nigel's death—till, tamed, I own,
 My hopes are fix'd on Heaven alone,
 Nor e'er shall earthly prospects win
 My heart to this vain world of sin.”—

XXV.

“Nay, Isabel, for such stern choice
 First wilt thou wait thy brother's voice;
 Then ponder if in convent scene
 No softer thoughts might intervene—
 Say they were of that unknown Knight,
 Victor in Woodstock's tourney-fight—
 Nay, if his name such blush you owe,
 Victorious o'er a fairer foe!”

Truly his penetrating eye
Hath caught that blush's passing dye,—
Like the last beam of evening thrown
On a white cloud,—just seen and gone.
Soon with calm cheek and steady eye,
The Princess made composed reply:—
"I guess my brother's meaning well;
For not so silent is the cell,
But we have heard the islemen all
Arm in thy cause at Ronald's call,
And mine eye proves that Knight unknown
And the brave Island Lord are one.—
Had then his suit been earlier made
In his own name, with thee to aid,
(But that his plighted faith forbade,)
I know not But thy page so near?—
This is no tale for menial's ear."

XXVI.

Still stood that page, as far apart
As the small cell would space afford;
With dizzy eye and bursting heart,
He leant his weight on Bruce's sword,
The monarch's mantle too he bore,
And drew the fold his visage o'er.
"Fear not for him—in murderous strife,"
Said Bruce, "his warning saved my life;
Full seldom parts he from my side,
And in his silence I confide,
Since he can tell no tale again.
He is a boy of gentle strain,
And I have purposed he shall dwell
In Augustine the chaplain's cell,
And wait on thee, my Isabel.—
Mind not his tears; I've seen them flow,
As in the thaw dissolves the snow.
'Tis a kind youth, but fanciful,
Unfit against the tide to pull,
And those that with the Bruce would sail,
Must learn to strive with stream and gale.
But forward, gentle Isabel—
My answer for Lord Ronald tell."—

XXVII.

"This answer be to Ronald given—
The heart he asks is fix'd on heaven.
My love was like a summer flower,
That wither'd in the wintry hour,
Born but of vanity and pride,
And with these sunny visions died.
If further press his suit—then say,
He should his plighted troth obey,
Troth plighted both with ring and word,
And sworn on crucifix and sword.—

Oh, shame thee, Robert! I have seen
 Thou hast a woman's guardian been!
 Even in extremity's dread hour,
 When press'd on thee the Southern power
 And safety, to all human sight,
 Was only found in rapid flight,
 Thou heardest a wretched female plain
 In agony of travail-pain,
 And thou didst bid thy little band
 Upon the instant turn and stand,
 And dare the worst the foe might do,
 Rather than, like a knight untrue,
 Leave to pursuers merciless
 A woman in her last distress.³¹
 And wilt thou now deny thine aid
 To an oppress'd and injured maid,
 Even plead for Ronald's perfidy,
 And press his fickle faith on me?—
 So witness Heaven, as true I vow,
 Had I those earthly feelings now,
 Which could my former bosom move
 Ere taught to set its hopes above,
 I'd spurn each proffer he could bring,
 Till at my feet he laid the ring,
 The ring and spousal contract both,
 And fair acquittal of his oath,
 By her who brooks his perjured scorn,
 The ill-requited Maid of Lorn!"

XXVIII.

With sudden impulse forward sprung
 The page, and on her neck he hung;
 Then, recollected instantly,
 His head he stoop'd, and bent his knee,
 Kiss'd twice the hand of Isabel,
 Arose, and sudden left the cell.—
 The Princess, loosen'd from his hold,
 Blush'd angry at his bearing bold;
 But good King Robert cried,
 "Chafe not—by signs he speaks his mind
 He heard the plan my care design'd,
 Nor could his transports hide.—
 But, sister, now bethink thee well:
 No easy choice the convent cell;
 Trust, I shall play no tyrant part,
 Either to force thy hand or heart,
 Or suffer that Lord Ronald scorn,
 Or wrong for thee, the Maid of Lorn.
 But think,—not long the time has been,
 That thou wert wont to sigh unseen,
 And wouldst the ditties best approve,
 That told some lay of hapless love.
 Now are thy wishes in thy power,
 And thou art bent on cloister bower!"

O ! if our Edward knew the change,
How would his busy satire range,
With many a sarcasm varied still
On woman's wish, and woman's will !"—

XXIX.

"Brother, I well believe," she said,
"Even so would Edward's part be play'd.
Kindly in heart, in word severe,
A foe to thought, and grief, and fear,
He holds his humour uncontroll'd ;
But thou art of another mould.
Say then to Ronald, as I say,
Unless before my feet he lay
The ring which bound the faith he swore,
By Edith freely yielded o'er,
He moves his suit to me no more.
Nor do I promise, even if now
He stood absolved of spousal vow,
That I would change my purpose made,
To shelter me in holy shade.—
Brother, for little space, farewell !
To other duties warns the bell."—

XXX.

"Lost to the world," King Robert said,
When he had left the royal maid,
"Lost to the world by lot severe,
O what a gem lies buried here,
Nipp'd by misfortune's cruel frost,
The buds of fair affection lost !—
But what have I with love to do !
Far sterner cares my lot pursue.
—Pent in this isle we may not lie,
Nor would it long our wants supply.
Right opposite, the mainland towers
Of my own Turnberry court our powers.—
—Might not my father's beadsman hoar,
Cuthbert, who dwells upon the shore,
Kindle a signal-flame, to show
The time propitious for the blow ?
It shall be so—some friend shall bear
Our mandate with despatch and care
—Edward shall find the messenger.
That fortress ours, the island fleet
May on the coast of Carrick meet.—
O Scotland ! shall it e'er be mine
To wreak thy wrongs in battle-line,
To raise my victor-head, and see
Thy hills, thy dales, thy people free,—
That glance of bliss is all I crave,
Betwixt my labours and my grave !"
Then down the hill he slowly went,
Oft pausing on the steep descent,
And reach'd the spot where his bold train
Held rustic camp upon the plain.

CANTO FIFTH.

I.

On fair Loch-Ranza stream'd the early day,
 Thin wreaths of cottage-smoke are upward curl'd
 From the lone hamlet, which her inland bay
 And circling mountains sever from the world.
 And there the fisherman his sail unfurl'd,
 The goat-herd drove his kids to steep Ben-Ghoil,
 Before the hut the dame her spindle twirl'd,
 Courting the sunbeam as she plied her toil,—
 For, wake where'er he may, Man wakes to care and toil.

But other duties call'd each convent maid,
 Roused by the summons of the moss-grown bell;
 Sung were the matins, and the mass was said,
 And every sister sought her separate cell,
 Such was the rule, her rosary to tell.
 And Isabel has knelt in lonely prayer;
 The sunbeam, through the narrow lattice, fell
 Upon the snowy neck and long dark hair,
 As stoop'd her gentle head in meek devotion there.

II.

She raised her eyes, that duty done,
 When glanced upon the pavement-stone,
 Gemm'd and enchased, a golden ring,
 Bound to a scroll with silken string,
 With few brief words inscribed to tell,
 "This for the Lady Isabel."
 Within, the writing farther bore,—
 "Twas with this ring his plight he swore,
 With this his promise I restore;
 To her who can the heart command,
 Well may I yield the plighted hand.
 And O! for better fortune born,
 Grudge not a passing sigh to mourn
 Her who was Edith once of Lorn!"
 One single flash of glad surprise
 Just glanced from Isabel's dark eyes,
 But vanish'd in the blush of shame,
 That, as its penance, instant came.
 "O thought unworthy of my race!
 Selfish, ungenerous, mean, and base,
 A moment's throb of joy to own,
 That rose upon her hopes o'erthrown!—
 Thou pledge of vows too well believed,
 Of man ingrate, and maid deceived,
 Think not thy lustre here shall gain
 Another heart to hope in vain!

For thou shalt rest, thou tempting gaud,
Where worldly thoughts are overawed,
And worldly splendours sink debased."
Then by the cross the ring she placed.

III.

Next rose the thought,—its owner far,
How came it here through bolt and bar?—
But the dim lattice is ajar.—
She looks abroad,—the morning dew
A light short step had brush'd anew,
And there were foot-prints seen
On the carved buttress rising still,
Till on the mossy window-sill
Their track effaced the green.
The ivy twigs were torn and fray'd,
As if some climber's steps to aid,—
But who the hardy messenger,
Whose venturous path these signs infer?—
Strange doubts are mine!—Mona, draw nigh;
—Nought 'scapes old Mona's curious eye—
What strangers, gentle mother, say,
Have sought these holy walls to-day?"—
None, Lady—none of note or name;
Only your brother's foot-page came,
At peep of dawn—I pray'd him pass
To chapel where they said the mass;
But like an arrow he shot by,
And tears seem'd bursting from his eye."

IV.

The truth at once on Isabel,
As darted by a sunbeam, fell:—
"Tis Edith's self!—her speechless woe,
Her form, her looks, the secret show!
—Instant, good Mona, to the bay,
And to my royal brother say,
I do conjure him seek my cell,
With that mute page he loves so well."
"What! know'st thou not his warlike host
At break of day has left our coast?
My old eyes saw them from the tower.
At eve they couch'd in greenwood bower,
At dawn a bugle signal, made
By their bold Lord, their ranks array'd;
Up sprung the spears through bush and tree,
No time for benediction!
Like deer, that, rousing from their lair,
Just shake the dewdrops from their hair,
And toss their armed crest aloft,
Such matins theirs!"—"Good mother, soft—
Where does my brother bend his way?"—
"As I have heard, for Brodick-Bay
Across the isle—of barks a score
Lie there, 'tis said, to waft them o'er,
On sudden news, to Carrick-shore."—

"If such their purpose, deep the need,"
Said anxious Isabel, "of speed!
Call Father Augustine, good dame."—
The nun obey'd, the Father came.

"Kind Father, hie without delay,
Across the hills to Brodick-Bay.
This message to the Bruce be given:
I pray him, by his hopes of Heaven,
That, till he speak with me, he stay!
Or, if his haste brook no delay,
That he deliver, on my suit,
Into thy charge that stripling mute.
Thus prays his sister Isabel,
For causes more than she may tell—
Away, good father! and take heed,
That life and death are on thy speed."
His cowl the good old priest did on,
Took his piked staff and sandall'd shoon,
And, like a palmer bent by eld,
O'er moss and moor his journey held.

VI.

Heavy and dull the foot of age,
And rugged was the pilgrimage;
But none were there beside, whose care
Might such important message bear.
Through birchen copse he wander'd slow,
Stunted and sapless, thin and low;
By many a mountain stream he pass'd,
From the tall cliffs in tumult cast,
Dashing to foam their waters dun,
And sparkling in the summer sun.
Round his grey head the wild curlew
In many a fearless circle flew.
O'er chasms he pass'd, where fractures wide
Craved wary eye and ample stride;³²
He cross'd his brow beside the stone
Where Druids erst heard victims groan,
And at the cairns upon the wild,
O'er many a heathen hero piled,
He breathed a timid prayer for those
Who died ere Shiloh's sun arose.
Beside Macfarlane's Cross he staid,
There told his hours within the shade,
And at the stream his thirst allay'd.
Thence onward journeying slowly still,
As evening closed he reach'd the hill,
Where, rising through the woodland green,
Old Brodick's gothic towers were seen,
From Hastings, late their English lord,
Douglas had won them by the sword.³³
The sun that sunk behind the isle,
Now tinged them with a parting smile.

VII.

But though the beams of light decay
'Twas bustle all in Brodick Bay.
The Bruce's followers crowd the shore,
And boats and barges some unmoor,
Some raise the sail, some seize the oar;
Their eyes oft turn'd where glimmer'd far
What might have seem'd an early star
On heaven's blue arch, save that its light
Was all too flickering, fierce, and bright.

Far distant in the south, the ray
Shone pale amid retiring day,
But as, on Carrick shore,
Dim seen in outline faintly blue,
The shades of evening closer drew,
It kindled more and more.

The monk's slow steps now press the sands,
And now amid a scene he stands,
Full strange to churchman's eye;
Warriors, who, arming for the fight,
Rivet and clasp their harness light,
And twinkling spears, and axes bright,
And helmets flashing high.

Oft, too, with unaccustom'd ears,
A language much unmeet he hears,³⁴

While, hastening all on board,
As stormy as the swelling surge
That mix'd its roar, the leaders urge
Their followers to the ocean verge,
With many a haughty word.

VIII.

Through that wild throng the Father pass'd,
And reach'd the Royal Bruce at last.
He leant against a stranded boat,
That the approaching tide must float,
And counted every rippling wave,
As higher yet her sides they lave,
And oft the distant fire he eyed,
And closer yet his hauberk tied,
And loosen'd in his sheath his brand.
Edward and Lennox were at hand,
Douglas and Ronald had the care
The soldiers to the barks to share.—
The Monk approach'd, and homage paid;
"And art thou come," King Robert said,
"So far, to bless us ere we part?"—
—"My Liege, and with a loyal heart!—
But other charge I have to tell,"—
And spoke the hest of Isabel.
—"Now by Saint Giles," the monarch cried,
"This moves me much!—this morning tide,
I sent the stripling to Saint Bride,
With my commandment there to bide."—

—"Thither he came, the portress show'd,
But there, my Liege, made brief abode"—

IX.

"Twas I," said Edward, "found employ
Of nobler import for the boy.
Deep pondering in my anxious mind,
A fitting messenger to find,
To bear thy written mandate o'er
To Cuthbert on the Carrick shore,
I chanced, at early dawn, to pass
The chapel gate to snatch a mass.
I found the stripling on a tomb
Low-seated, weeping for the doom
That gave his youth to convent gloom.
I told my purpose, and his eyes
Flash'd joyful at the glad surprise.
He bounded to the skiff, the sail
Was spread before a prosperous gale,
And well my charge he hath obey'd;
For, see! the ruddy signal made,
That Clifford, with his merry-men all,
Guards carelessly our father's hall."—

X.

"O wild of thought, and hard of heart!"
Answer'd the Monarch, "on a part
Of such deep danger to employ
A mute, an orphan, and a boy!
Unfit for flight, unfit for strife,
Without a tongue to plead for life!
Now, were my right restored by Heaven.
Edward, my crown I would have given,
Ere, thrust on such adventure wild,
I perill'd thus the helpless child."—
—Offended half, and half submiss,—
"Brother and Liege of blame like this,"
Edward replied, "I little dream'd.
A stranger messenger, I deem'd,
Might safest seek the beadsman's cell,
Where all thy squires are known so well.
Noteless his presence, sharp his sense,
His imperfection his defence.
If seen, none can his errand guess;
If ta'en, his words no tale express—
Methinks, too, yonder beacon's shine
Might expiate greater fault than mine."—
"Rash," said King Robert, "was the deed—
But it is done.—Embark with speed!—
Good Father, say to Isabel
How this unhappy chance befell;
If well we thrive on yonder shore,
Soon shall my care her page restore.
Our greeting to our sister bear,
And think of us in mass and prayer."—

XI.

"Aye!" said the Priest,—“while this poor hand
Can chalice raise or cross command,
While my old voice has accents' use,
Can Augustine forget the Bruce?”
Then to his side Lord Ronald press'd,
And whisper'd—“Bear thou this request,
That when by Bruce's side I fight,
For Scotland's crown and freedom's right,
The princess grace her knight to bear
Some token of her favouring care;
It shall be shown where England's best
May shrink to see it on my crest.
And for the boy—since weightier care
For Royal Bruce the times prepare,
The helpless youth is Ronald's charge,
His couch my plaid, his fence my targe.”
He ceased; for many an eager hand
Had urged the barges from the strand.
Their number was a score and ten,
They bore thrice threescore chosen men.
With such small force did Bruce at last
The die for death or empire cast!

XII.

Now on the darkening main afloat,
Ready and mann'd, rocks every boat;
Beneath their oars the ocean's might
Was dash'd to sparks of glimmering light.
Faint and more faint, as off they bore,
Their armour glanced against the shore,
And, mingled with the dashing tide,
Their murmuring voices distant died.—
“God speed them!” said the Priest, as dark
On distant billows glides each bark;
O Heaven! when swords for freedom shine,
And monarch's right, the cause is thine!
Edge doubly every patriot blow!
Beat down the banners of the foe!
And be it to the nations known,
That Victory is from God alone!”
As up the hill his path he drew,
He turn'd, his blessings to renew,
Oft turn'd, till on the darken'd coast
All traces of their course were lost;
Then slowly bent to Brodick tower,
To shelter for the evening hour.

XIII.

In night the fairy prospects sink,
Where Cumray's isles with verdant link
Close the fair entrance of the Clyde;
The woods of Bute, no more descried,
Are gone; and on the placid sea
The rowers ply their task with glee,

While hands that knightly lances bore
Impatient aid the labouring oar.
The half-faced moon shone dim and pale,
And glanced against the whiten'd sail;
But on that ruddy beacon-light
Each steersman kept the helm aright,
And oft, for such the King's command,
That all at once might reach the strand,
From boat to boat loud shout and hail
Warn'd them to crowd or slacken sail.
South and by west the armada bore,
And near at length the Carrick shore.
As less and less the distance grows,
High and more high the beacon rose;
The light, that seem'd a twinkling star,
Now blazed portentous, fierce, and far.
Dark-red the heaven above it glow'd,
Dark-red the sea beneath it flow'd,
Red rose the rocks on ocean's brim,
In blood-red light her islets swim;
Wild scream the dazzled sea-fowl gave,
Dropp'd from their crags on plashing wave.
The deer to distant covert drew,
The black-cock deem'd it day, and crew.
Like some tall castle given to flame,
O'er half the land the lustre came.
"Now, good my Liege, and brother sage,
What think ye of mine elfin page?"—
"Row on!" the noble King replied;
"We'll learn the truth, whate'er betide;
Yet sure the beadsman and the child
Could ne'er have waked that beacon wild."

XIV.

With that the boats approach'd the land,
But Edward's grounded on the sand;
The eager Knight leap'd in the sea
Waist-deep and first on shore was he,
Though every barge's hardy band
Contended which should gain the land,
When that strange light, which, seen afar,
Seem'd steady as the polar star,
Now, like a prophet's fiery chair,
Seem'd travelling the realms of air.
Wide o'er the sky the splendour glows,
As that portentous meteor rose;
Helm, axe, and falchion glitter'd bright,
And in the red and dusky light
His comrade's face each warrior saw,
Nor marvell'd it was pale with awe,
Then high in air the beams were lost,
And darkness sunk upon the coast.—
Ronald to Heaven a prayer address'd,
And Douglas cross'd his dauntless breast;

"Saint James protect us!" Lennox cried;
But reckless Edward spoke aside—
"Deem'st thou, Kirkpatrick, in that flame
Red Comyn's angry spirit came,
Or would thy dauntless heart endure
Once more to make assurance sure?"—
"Hush!" said the Bruce, "we soon shall know,
If this be sorcerer's empty show,
Or stratagem of southern foe.
The moon shines out—upon the sand
Let every leader rank his band."

XV.

Faintly the moon's pale beams supply
That ruddy light's unnatural dye;
The dubious cold reflection lay
On the wet sands and quiet bay.
Beneath the rocks King Robert drew
His scatter'd files to order due,
Till shield compact and serried spear
In the cool light shone blue and clear.
Then down a path that sought the tide,
That speechless page was seen to glide;
He knelt him lowly on the sand,
And gave a scroll to Robert's hand.
"A torch," the Monarch cried—"What, ho!
Now shall we Cuthbert's tidings know."
But evil news the letters bear,—
The Clifford's force was strong and ware,
Augmented, too, that very morn,
By mountaineers who came with Lorn.
Long harrow'd by oppressor's hand,
Courage and faith had fled the land,
And over Carrick, dark and deep,
Had sunk dejection's iron sleep.—
Cuthbert had seen that beacon flame,
Unwitting from what source it came.
Doubtful of perilous event,
Edward's mute messenger he sent,
If Bruce deceived should venture o'er,
To warn him from the fatal shore.

XVI.

As round the torch the leaders crowd,
Bruce read these chilling news aloud.
"What council, nobles, have we now?—
To ambush us in greenwood bough,
And take the chance which fate may send
To bring our enterprise to end?
Or shall we turn us to the main
As exiles, and embark again?"—
Answer'd fierce Edward—"Hap what may;
In Carrick, Carrick's Lord must stay.
I would not minstrels told the tale,
Wildfire or meteor made us quail."

Answer'd the Douglas—"If my Liege
May win yon walls by storm or siege,
Then were each brave and patriot heart
Kindled of new for loyal part."—

Answer'd Lord Ronald—"Not for shame
Would I that aged Torquil came,
And found, for all our empty boast,
Without a blow we fled the coast.
I will not credit that this land,
So famed for warlike heart and hand,
The nurse of Wallace and of Bruce,
Will long with tyrants hold a truce."—

"Prove we our fate—the brunt we'll bide!"
So Boyd and Haye and Lennox cried;
So said, so vow'd, the leaders all;
So Bruce resolved:—"And in my hall
Since the Bold Southern make their home,
The hour of payment soon shall come,
When with a rough and rugged host
Clifford may reckon to his cost.
Meantime, through well-known bosk and dell,
I'll lead where we may shelter well."

XVII.

Now ask you whence that wondrous light,
Whose fairy glow beguil'd their sight?—
It ne'er was known⁵⁵—yet grey-hair'd eld
A superstitious credence held,
That never did a mortal hand
Wake its broad glare on Carrick strand;
Nay, and that on the self-same night
When Bruce cross'd o'er, still gleams the light.
Yearly it gleams o'er mount and moor,
And glittering wave and crimson'd shore--
But whether beam celestial, lent
By Heaven to aid the King's descent,
Or fire hell-kindled from beneath,
To lure him to defeat and death,
Or were it but some meteor strange,
Of such as oft through midnight range,
Startling the traveller late and lone,
I know not—and it ne'er was known.

XVIII.

Now up the rocky pass they drew,
And Ronald, to his promise true,
Still made his arm the stripling's stay,
To aid him on the rugged way.
"Now cheer thee, simple Amadine!
Why throbs that silly heart of thine?"—
—That name the pirates to their slave
(In Gaelic 'tis the Changeling) gave—
"Dost thou not rest thee on my arm?
Do not my plaid-folds hold thee warm?"

Hath not the wild bull's treble hide
This targe for thee and me supplied?
Is not Clan-Colla's sword of steel?
And, trembler, canst thou terror feel?
Cheer thee, and still that throbbing heart;
From Ronald's guard thou shalt not part."
—O! many a shaft, at random sent,
Finds mark the archer little meant!
And many a word, at random spoken,
May soothe or wound a heart that's broken!
Half soothed, half grieved, half terrified,
Close drew the page to Ronald's side;
A wild delirious thrill of joy
Was in that hour of agony,
As up the steepy pass he strove,
Fear, toil, and sorrow, lost in love!

XIX.

The barrier of that iron shore,
The rock's steep ledge, is now climb'd o'er;
And from the castle's distant wall,
From tower to tower the warders call:
The sound swings over land and sea,
And marks a watchful enemy.—
They gain'd the Chase, a wide domain
Left for the castle's sylvan reign,
(Seek not the scene—the axe, the plough,
The boor's dull fence, have marr'd it now.)
But then, soft swept in velvet green
The plain with many a glade between,
Whose tangled alleys far invade
The depth of the brown forest shade.
Here the tall fern obscured the lawn,
Fair shelter for the sportive fawn;
There, tufted close with copsewood green,
Was many a swelling hillock seen;
And all around was verdure meet
For pressure of the fairies' feet.
The glossy holly loved the park,
The yew-tree lent its shadow dark,
And many an old oak, worn and bare,
With all its shiver'd boughs, was there.
Lovely between, the moonbeams fell
On lawn and hillock, glade and dell.
The gallant Monarch sigh'd to see
These glades so loved in childhood free,
Bethinking that, as outlaw now,
He ranged beneath the forest bough.

XX.

Fast o'er the moonlight Chase they sped.
Well knew the band that measured tread,
When, in retreat or in advance,
The serried warriors move at once;

And evil were the luck, if dawn
 Descried them on the open lawn.
 Copses they traverse, brooks they cross,
 Strain up the bank and o'er the moss.
 From the exhausted page's brow
 Cold drops of toil are streaming now;
 With effort faint and lengthen'd pause,
 His weary step the stripling draws.
 "Nay, droop not yet!" the warrior said;
 "Come, let me give thee ease and aid!
 Strong are mine arms, and little care
 A weight so slight as thine to bear.—
 What! wilt thou not?—capricious boy!
 Then thine own limbs and strength employ.
 Pass but this night, and pass thy care,
 I'll place thee with a lady fair,
 Where thou shalt tune thy lute to tell
 How Ronald loves fair Isabel!"
 Worn out, dishearten'd, and dismay'd,
 Here Amadine let go the plaid;
 His trembling limbs their aid refuse,
 He sunk among the midnight dew!

XXI.

What may be done?—the night is gone—
 The Bruce's band moves swiftly on—
 Eternal shame, if at the brunt
 Lord Ronald grace not battle's front!—
 "See yonder oak, within whose trunk
 Decay a darken'd cell hath sunk;
 Enter, and rest thee there a space,
 Wrap in my plaid thy limbs, thy face.
 I will not be, believe me, far;
 But must not quit the ranks of war.
 Well will I mark the bosky bourne,
 And soon, to guard thee hence, return.—
 Nay weep not so, thou simple boy!
 But sleep in peace, and wake in joy."
 In silvan lodging close bestow'd,
 He placed the page, and onward strode
 With strength put forth, o'er moss and brook,
 And soon the marching band o'ertook.

XXII.

Thus strangely left, long sobb'd and wept
 The page, till, wearied out, he slept—
 A rough voice waked his dream—"Nay, here,
 Here by this thicket, pass'd the deer—
 Beneath that oak old Ryno staid—
 What have we here?—a Scottish plaid,
 And in its folds a stripling laid?—
 Come forth! thy name and business tell!
 What, silence!—then I guess thee well,
 The spy that sought old Cuthbert's cell,

Wafted from Arran yester morn—
Come, comrades, we will straight return.
Our Lord may choose the rack should teach
To this young lurcher use of speech.
Thy bow-string, till I bind him fast.”—
“Nay, but he weeps and stands aghast;
Unbound we'll lead him, fear it not;
’Tis a fair stripling, though a Scot.”
The hunters to the castle sped,
And there the hapless captive led.

XXIII.

Stout Clifford in the castle-court
Prepared him for the morning sport;
And now with Lorn held deep discourse,
Now gave command for hound and horse.
War-steeds and palfreys paw'd the ground,
And many a deer-dog howl'd around.
To Amadine Lorn's well-known word
Replying to that Southern Lord,
Mix'd with this clanging din, might seem
The phantasm of a fever'd dream.
The tone upon his ringing ears
Came like the sounds which fancy hears,
When in rude waves or roaring winds
Some words of woe the muser finds,
Until more loudly and more near,
Their speech arrests the page's ear.

XXIV.

“And was she thus,” said Clifford, “lost?
The priest should rue it to his cost!
What says the monk?”—“The holy Sire
Owns, that in masquer's quaint attire
She sought his skiff, disguised, unknown
To all except to him alone.
But, says the priest, a bark from Lorn
Laid them aboard that very morn,
And pirates seized her for their prey.
He proffer'd ransom-gold to pay,
And they agreed—but e'er told o'er,
The winds blow loud, the billows roar;
They sever'd, and they met no more.
He deems—such tempest vex'd the coast—
Ship, crew, and fugitive, were lost.
So let it be, with the disgrace
And scandal of her lofty race!
Thrice better she had ne'er been born,
Than brought her infamy on Lorn!”

XXV.

Lord Clifford now the captive spied;—
“Whom, Herbert, hast thou there?” he cried.
“A spy we seized within the Chase,
A hollow oak his lurking place.”—

"What tidings can the youth afford?"—
 "He plays the mute."—"Then noose a cord—
 Unless brave Lorn reverse the doom
 For his plaid's sake."—"Clan-Colla's loom,"
 Said Lorn, whose careless glances trace
 Rather the vesture than the face,
 "Clan-Colla's dames such tartans twine;
 Wearer nor plaid claims care of mine.
 Give him, if my advice you crave,
 His own scathed oak; and let him wave
 In air, unless, by terror wrung,
 A frank confession find his tongue.—
 Nor shall he die without his rite;
 —Thou, Angus Roy, attend the sight,
 And give Clan-Colla's dirge thy breath,
 As they convey him to his death."—
 "O brother! cruel to the last!"
 Through the poor captive's bosom pass'd
 The thought, but, to his purpose true,
 He said not, though he sigh'd, "Adieu!"

XXVI.

And will he keep his purpose still,
 In sight of that last closing ill,
 When one poor breath, one single word,
 May freedom, safety, life, afford?
 Can he resist the instinctive call,
 For life that bids us barter all?—
 Love, strong as death, his heart hath steel'd,
 His nerves hath strung—he will not yield!
 Since that poor breath, that little word,
 May yield Lord Ronald to the sword.—
 Clan-Colla's dirge is pealing wide,
 The grisly headsman's by his side;
 Along the greenwood Chase they bend,
 And now their march has ghastly end!
 That old and shatter'd oak beneath,
 They destine for the place of death.
 —What thoughts are his, while all in vain
 His eye for aid explores the plain?
 What thoughts, while, with a dizzy ear,
 He hears the death-prayer mutter'd near?
 And must he die such death accurst,
 Or will that bosom-secret burst?
 Cold on his brow breaks terror's dew,
 His trembling lips are livid blue;
 The agony of parting life
 Has nought to match that moment's strife!

XXVII.

But other witnesses are nigh,
 Who mock at fear, and death defy!
 Soon as the dire lament was play'd,
 It waked the lurking ambuscade.

The Island Lord look'd forth, and spied
The cause, and loud in fury cried,—
"By Heaven, they lead the page to die,
And mock me in his agony!
They shall abye it!"—On his arm
Bruce laid strong grasp—"They shall not harm
A ringlet of the stripling's hair;
But, till I give the word, forbear.
—Douglas, lead fifty of our force
Up yonder hollow water-course,
And couch thee midway on the wold,
Between the flyers and their hold:
A spear above the copse display'd,
Be signal of the ambush made.
—Edward, with forty spearmen, straight
Through yonder copse approach the gate,
And, when thou hear'st the battle-din,
Rush forward, and the passage win,
Secure the drawbridge—storm the port,
And man and guard the castle-court.—
The rest move slowly forth with me,
In shelter of the forest-tree,
Till Douglas at his post I see."

XXVIII.

Like war-horse eager to rush on,
Compell'd to wait the signal blown,
Hid, and scarce hid, by greenwood bough,
Trembling with rage, stands Ronald now,
And in his grasp his sword gleams blue,
Soon to be dyed with deadlier hue.—
Meanwhile the Bruce, with steady eye,
Sees the dark death-train moving by,
And, heedful, measures off the space
The Douglas and his band must trace,
Ere they can reach their destined ground.
Now sinks the dirge's wailing sound,
Now cluster round the direful tree
That slow and solemn company,
While hymn mistuned and mutter'd prayer
The victim for his fate prepare.—
What glances o'er the greenwood shade?
The spear that marks the ambuscade!—
"Now, noble Chief! I leave thee loose;—
Upon them, Ronald!" said the Bruce.

XXIX.

"The Bruce! the Bruce!" to well-known cry
His native rocks and woods reply.
"The Bruce! the Bruce!" in that dread word
The knell of hundred deaths was heard.
The astonish'd Southern gazed at first,
Where the wild tempest was to burst,
That waked in that presaging name
Before, behind, around it came!

Half-arm'd, surprised, on every side
 Hemm'd in, hew'd down, they bled and died.
 Deep in the ring the Bruce engaged,
 And fierce Clan-Colla's broadsword raged !
 Full soon the few who fought were sped,
 Nor better was their lot who fled,
 And met, 'mid terror's wild career,
 The Douglas's redoubted spear !
 Two hundred yeomen on that morn
 The castle left and none return.

XXX.

Not on their flight press'd Ronald's brand,
 A gentler duty claim'd his hand.
 He rais'd the page, where on the plain
 His fear had sunk him with the slain :
 And twice, that morn, surprise well near
 Betray'd the secret kept by fear :
 Once, when, with life returning, came
 To the boy's lip Lord Ronald's name,
 And hardly recollection drown'd
 The accents in a murmuring sound ;
 And once, when scarce he could resist
 The Chieftain's care to lose the vest,
 Drawn tightly o'er his labouring breast.
 But then the Bruce's bugle blew,
 For martial work was yet to do.

XXXI.

A harder task fierce Edward waits.
 Ere signal given, the castle gates
 His fury had assail'd ;
 Such was his wonted reckless mood,
 Yet desperate valour oft made good,
 Even by its daring, venture rude,
 Where prudence might have fail'd.
 Upon the bridge his strength he threw,
 And struck the iron chain in two,
 By which its planks arose ;
 The warder next his axe's edge
 Struck down upon the threshold ledge,
 'Twixt door and post a ghastly wedge !
 The gate they may not close.
 Well fought the Southern in the fray,
 Clifford and Lorn fought well that day,
 But stubborn Edward forced his way
 Against a hundred foes.
 Loud came the cry, " The Bruce ! the Bruce !"
 No hope or in defence or truce,—
 Fresh combatants pour in ;
 Mad with success, and drunk with gore,
 They drive the struggling foe before,
 And ward on ward they win.
 Unsparing was the vengeful sword,
 And limbs were lopp'd and life-blood pour'd.

The cry of death and conflict roar'd,
And fearful was the din !
The startling horses plunged and flung,
Clamour'd the dogs till turrets rung,
Nor sunk the fearful cry,
Till not a foeman was there found
Alive, save those who on the ground
Groan'd in their agony !

XXXII.

The valiant Clifford is no more ;
On Ronald's broadsword stream'd his gore.
But better hap had he of Lorn,
Who, by the foemen backward borne,
Yet gain'd with slender train the port,
Where lay his bark beneath the fort,
And cut the cable loose.
Short were his shrift in that debate,
That hour of fury and of fate,
If Lorn encounter'd Bruce !
Then long and loud the victor shout
From turret and from tower rung out,
The rugged vaults replied ;
And from the donjon tower on high,
The men of Carrick may descry
Saint Andrew's cross, in blazonry
Of silver, waving wide !

XXXIII.

The Bruce hath won his father's hall !^a
—"Welcome brave friends and comrades all,
Welcome to mirth and joy !
The first, the last, is welcome here,
From lord and chieftain, prince and peer
To this poor speechless boy.
Great God ! once more my sire's abode
Is mine—behold the floor I trod
In tottering infancy !
And there the vaulted arch, whose sound
Echoed my joyous shout and bound
In boyhood, and that rung around
To youth's unthinking glee !
O first, to thee, all-gracious Heaven,
Then to my friends, my thanks be given !"—
He paused a space, his brow he cross'd—
Then on the board his sword he toss'd,
Yet steaming hot ; with Southern gore
From hilt to point 't was crimson'd o'er.

XXXIV.

"Bring here," he said, "the mazers four,"
My noble fathers loved of yore.

^a These mazers were large drinking-cups or goblets.

Thrice let them circle round the board,
 The pledge, fair Scotland's rights restored!
 And he whose lip shall touch the wine,
 Without a vow as true as mine,
 To hold both lands and life at nought,
 Until her freedom shall be bought,—
 Be brand of a disloyal Scot,
 And lasting infamy his lot!
 Sit, gentle friends!—our hour of glee
 Is brief we'll spend it joyously!
 Blithest of all the sun's bright beams,
 When betwixt storm and storm he gleams.
 Well is our country's work begun,
 But more, far more, must yet be done.
 Speed messengers the country through;
 Arouse old friends and gather new;
 Warn Lanark's knights to gird their mail,
 Rouse the brave sons of Teviotdale,
 Let Ettrick's archers sharp their darts,
 The fairest forms, the truest hearts!
 Call all, call all! from Reeds-wair-Path,
 To the wild confines of Cape-wrath;
 Wide let the news through Scotland ring,—
 The Northern Eagle claps his wing!"

CANTO SIXTH.

I.

O WHO, that shared them, ever shall forget
 The emotions of the spirit-rousing time,
 When breathless in the mart the couriers met
 Early and late, at evening and at prime;
 When the loud cannon and the merry chime
 Hail'd news on news, as field on field was won,
 When Hope, long doubtful, soar'd at length sublime,
 And our glad eyes, awake as day begun,
 Watch'd Joy's broad banner rise, to meet the rising sun!

O these were hours, when thrilling joy repaid
 A long, long course of darkness, doubts, and fears!
 The heart-sick faintness of the hope delay'd,—
 The waste, the woe, the bloodshed, and the tears
 That track'd with terror twenty rolling years,—
 All was forgot in that blithe jubilee!
 Her downcast eye even pale Affliction rears,
 To sigh a thankful prayer, amid the glee
 That hail'd the Despot's fall, and peace and liberty!

Such news o'er Scotland's hills triumphant rode,
When 'gainst the invaders turn'd the battle's scale,
When Bruce's banner had victorious flow'd
O'er Loudoun's mountain, and in Ury's vale;²⁷
When English blood oft deluged Douglas-dale,²⁸
And fiery Edward routed stout St John,²⁹
When Randolph's war-cry swell'd the southern gale,³⁰
And many a fortress, town, and tower, was won,
And Fame still sounded forth fresh deeds of glory done.

II.

Blithe tidings flew from baron's tower,
To peasant's cot, to forest-bower,
And waked the solitary cell,
Where lone Saint Bride's recluses dwell.
Princess no more, fair Isabel,
A votress of the order now,
Say, did the rule that bade thee wear
Dim veil and woollen scapulaire,
And reft thy locks of dark-brown hair
That stern and rigid vow,
Did it condemn the transport high,
Which glisten'd in thy watery eye,
When minstrel or when palmer told
Each fresh exploit of Bruce the bold?—
And whose the lovely form, that shares
Thy anxious hopes, thy fears, thy prayers?
No sister she of convent shade;
So say these locks in lengthen'd braid,
So say the blushes and the sighs,
The tremors that unbidden rise,
When, mingled with the Bruce's fame,
The brave Lord Ronald's praises came.

III.

Believe, his father's castle won,
And his bold enterprise begun,
That Bruce's earliest cares restore
The speechless page to Arran's shore:
Nor think that long the quaint disguise
Concealed her from a sister's eyes;
And sister-like in love they dwell
In that lone convent's silent cell.
There Bruce's slow ascent allows
Fair Isabel the veil and vows;
And there, her sex's dress regain'd,
The lovely Maid of Lorn remain'd,
Unnamed, unknown, while Scotland far
Resounded with the din of war;
And many a month, and many a day,
In calm seclusion wore away.

IV.

These days, these months, to years had worn,
When tidings of high weight were borne
To that lone island's shore.

Of all the Scottish conquests made
 By the First Edward's ruthless blade,
 His son retain'd no more,
 Northward of Tweed, but Stirling's towers,
 Beleagu'rd by King Robert's powers;
 And they took term of truce,⁴¹
 If England's King should not relieve
 The siege ere John the Baptist's eve,
 To yield them to the Bruce.
 England was roused—on every side
 Courier and post and herald hied,
 To summon prince and peer,
 At Berwick-bounds to meet their Liege,
 Prepared to raise fair Stirling's siege,
 With buckler, brand, and spear.
 The term was nigh—they muster'd fast,
 By beacon and by bugle-blast
 Forth marshall'd for the field;
 There rode each knight of noble name,
 There England's hardy archers came,
 The land they trod seem'd all on flame,
 With banner, blade, and shield!
 And not famed England's powers alone,
 Renown'd in arms, the summons own;
 For Neustria's knights obey'd,
 Gasconne hath lent her horsemen good,
 And Cambria, but of late subdued,
 Sent forth her mountain-multitude,⁴²
 And Connoght pour'd from waste and wood
 Her hundred tribes, whose sceptre rude
 Dark Eth O'Connor sway'd.⁴³

V.

Right to devoted Caledon
 The storm of war rolls slowly on,
 With menace deep and dread;
 So the dark clouds, with gathering power,
 Suspend awhile the threaten'd shower,
 Till every peak and summit lower
 Round the pale pilgrim's head.
 Not with such pilgrim's startled eye
 King Robert mark'd the tempest nigh!
 Resolved the brunt to bide,
 His royal summons warn'd the land,
 That all who own'd their King's command
 Should instant take the spear and brand,
 To combat at his side.
 O who may tell the sons of fame,
 That at King Robert's bidding came,
 To battle for the right!
 From Cheviot to the shores of Ross,
 From Solway-Sands to Marshal's-Moss,
 All boun'd them for the fight.
 Such news the royal courier tells,
 Who came to rouse dark Arran's dells;

But farther tidings must the ear
Of Isabel in secret bear.
These in her cloister walk, next morn,
Thus shared she with the Maid of Lorn :-

VI.

" My Edith, can I tell how dear
Our intercourse of hearts sincere
Hath been to Isabel ?—
Judge then the sorrow of my heart,
When I must say the words, We part !
The cheerless convent-cell
Was not, sweet maiden, made for thee :
Go thou where thy vocation free
On happier fortunes fell.
Nor, Edith, judge thyself betray'd,
Though Robert knows that Lorn's high Maid
And his poor silent page were one.
Versed in the fickle heart of man,
Earnest and anxious hath he look'd
How Ronald's heart the message brook'd
That gave him, with her last farewell,
The charge of Sister Isabel,
To think upon thy better right,
And keep the faith his promise plight.
Forgive him for thy sister's sake,
At first if vain repinings wake—
Long since that mood is gone :
Now dwells he on thy juster claims,
And oft his breach of faith he blames—
Forgive him for thine own !"—

VII.

" No ! never to Lord Ronald's bower
Will I again as paramour"—
" Nay, hush thee, too impatient maid,
Until my final tale be said !—
The good King Robert would engage
Edith once more his elfin page,
By her own heart, and her own eye,
Her lover's penitence to try—
Safe in his royal charge, and free,
Should such thy final purpose be,
Again unknown to seek the cell,
And live and die with Isabel."
Thus spoke the maid—King Robert's eye,
Might have some glance of policy ;
Dunstaffnage had the Monarch ta'en,
And Lorn had own'd King Robert's reign
Her brother had to England fled,
And there in banishment was dead ;
Ample, through exile, death, and flight,
O'er tower and land was Edith's right ;
This ample right o'er tower and land
Were safe in Ronald's faithful hand.

VIII.

Embarrass'd eye and blushing cheek,
 Pleasure and shame, and fear bespeak !
 Yet much the reasoning Edith made :—
 " Her sister's faith she must upbraid,
 Who gave such secret, dark and dear,
 In council to another's ear.
 Why should she leave the peaceful cell ?—
 How should she part with Isabel ?—
 How wear that strange attire agen ?—
 How risk herself 'midst martial men ?—
 And how be guarded on the way ?—
 At least she might entreat delay."
 Kind Isabel, with secret smile,
 Saw and forgave the maiden's wile,
 Reluctant to be thought to move
 At the first call of truant love.

IX.

Oh, blame her not !—when zephyrs wake,
 The aspen's trembling leaves must shake ;
 When beams the sun through April shower,
 It needs must bloom, the violet flower ;
 And Love, howe'er the maiden strive,
 Must with reviving hope revive !
 A thousand soft excuses came,
 To plead his cause 'gainst virgin shame.
 Pledged by their sires in earliest youth,
 He had her plighted faith and truth—
 Then, 'twas her Liege's strict command,
 And she, beneath his royal hand,
 A ward in person and in land :—
 And, last, she was resolved to stay
 Only brief space—one little day—
 Close hidden in her safe disguise
 From all, but most from Ronald's eyes—
 But once to see him more !—nor blame
 Her wish—to hear him name her name !
 Then, to bear back to solitude
 The thought he had his falsehood rued !—
 But Isabel, who long had seen
 Her pallid cheek and pensive mien,
 And well herself the cause might know,
 Though innocent of Edith's woe,
 Joy'd, generous, that revolving time
 Gave means to expiate the crime.
 High glow'd her bosom as she said—
 " Well shall her sufferings be repaid !"—
 Now came the parting hour—a band
 From Arran's mountains left the land :
 Their chief, Fitz-Louis had the care
 The speechless Amadine to bear
 To Bruce, with honour, as behoved
 To page the monarch dearly loved.

X.

The King had deem'd the maiden bright
Should reach him long before the fight,
But storms and fate her course delay.
It was on eve of battle-day,
When o'er the Gillie's-hill she rode.
The landscape like a furnace glow'd,
And far as e'er the eye was borne,
The lances waved like autumn-corn.
In battles four, beneath their eye,
The forces of King Robert lie.
And one below the hill was laid,
Reserved for rescue and for aid;
And three, advanced, form'd vaward-line,
'Twixt Bannock's brook and Ninian's shrine.
Detach'd was each, yet each so nigh
As well might mutual aid supply.—
Beyond, the Southern host appears,
A boundless wilderness of spears,
Whose verge or rear the anxious eye
Strove far, but strove in vain, to spy.
Thick flashing in the evening beam,
Glaives, lances, bills, and banners gleam;
And where the heaven join'd with the hill,
Was distant armour flashing still,
So wide, so far, the boundless host
Seem'd in the blue horizon lost.

XI.

Down from the hill the maiden pass'd,
At the wild show of war aghast;
And traversed first the rearward host,
Reserved for aid where needed most.
The men of Carrick and of Ayr,
Lennox and Lanark, too, were there,
And all the western land;
With these the valiant of the Isles
Beneath their Chieftains rank'd their files,
In many a plaided band.
There, in the centre, proudly raised,
The Bruce's royal standard blazed,
And there Lord Ronald's banner bore
A galley driven by sail and oar.
A wild, yet pleasing contrast, made
Warriors in mail and plate array'd,
With the plumed bonnet and the plaid
By these Hebrideans worn;
But O! unseen for three long years,
Dear was the garb of mountaineers
To the fair Maid of Lorn!
For one she look'd—but he was far,
Busied amid the ranks of war—
Yet with affection's troubled eye
She mark'd his banner boldly fly,

Gave on the countless foe a glance,
And thought on battle's desperate chance.

XII.

To centre of the vaward-line
Fitz-Louis guided Amadine.
Arm'd all on foot, that host appears
A serried mass of glimmering spears.
There stood the Marchers' warlike band,
The warriors there of Lodon's land;
Ettrick and Liddell bent the yew,
A band of archers fierce, though few;
The men of Nith and Annan's vale,
And the bold Spears of Teviotdale;—
The dauntless Douglas these obey,
And the young Stuart's gentle sway.
North-eastward by Saint Ninian's shrine,
Beneath fierce Randolph's charge, combine
The warriors whom the hardy North
From Tay to Sutherland sent forth.
The rest of Scotland's war-array
With Edward Bruce to westward lay,
Where Bannock, with his broken bank
And deep ravine, protects their flank.
Behind them, screen'd by sheltering wood,
The gallant Keith, Lord Marshal, stood:
His men-at-arms bare mace and lance,
And plumes that wave, and helms that glance.
Thus fair divided by the King,
Centre, and right, and left-ward wing;
Composed his front; nor distant far
Was strong reserve to aid the war.
And 'twas to front of this array,
Her guide and Edith made their way.

XIII.

Here must they pause; for, in advance
As far as one might pitch a lance,
The Monarch rode along the van, "1
The foe's approaching force to scan,
His line to marshal and to range,
And ranks to square, and fronts to change.
Alone he rode—from head to heel
Sheathed in his ready arms of steel;
Nor mounted yet on war-horse wight,
But, till more near the shock of fight,
Reining a palfrey low and light.
A diadem of gold was set
Above his bright steel basinet,
And clasp'd within its glittering twine
Was seen the glove of Argentine;
Truncheon or leading staff he lacks,
Bearing, instead, a battle-axe.
He ranged his soldiers for the fight,
Accoutred thus, in open sight

Of either host.—Three bowshots far,
Paused the deep front of England's war
And rested on their arms awhile,
To close and rank their warlike file,
And hold high council, if that night
Should view the strife, or dawning light.

XIV.

O gay, yet fearful to behold,
Flashing with steel and rough with gold,
And bristled o'er with bills and spears,
With plumes and pennons waving fair,
Was that bright battle-front! for there
Rode England's King and Peers:
And who, that saw that Monarch ride,
His kingdom battled by his side,
Could then his direful doom foretell!—
Fair was his seat in knightly selle,
And in his sprightly eye was set
Some spark of the Plantagenet.
Though light and wandering was his glance,
It flash'd at sight of shield and lance:—
"Know'st thou," he said, "De Argentine,
Yon knight who marshals thus their line?"—
"The tokens on his helmet tell
The Bruce, my Liege: I know him well."—
"And shall the audacious traitor brave
The presence where our banners wave?"—
"So please my Liege," said Argentine,
"Were he but horsed on steed like mine,
To give him fair and knightly chance,
I would adventure forth my lance."—
"In battle day," the King replied,
"Nice tourney rules are set aside.
—Still must the rebel dare our wrath?
Set on him—Sweep him from our path!"
And, at King Edward's signal, soon
Dash'd from the ranks Sir Henry Boun.

XV.

Of Hereford's high blood he came,
A race renown'd for knightly fame.
He burn'd before his Monarch's eye
To do some deed of chivalry.
He spurr'd his steed, he couch'd his lance,
And darted on the Bruce at once.
—As motionless as rocks, that bide
The wrath of the advancing tide,
The Bruce stood fast.—Each breast bent high,
And dazzled was each gazing eye—
The heart had hardly time to think,
The eyelid scarce had time to wink,
While on the King, like flash of flame,
Spurr'd to full speed the war-horse came!

The partridge may the falcon mock,
 If that slight palfrey stand the shock—
 But, swerving from the Knight's career,
 Just as they met, Bruce shunn'd the spear.
 Onward the baffled warrior bore
 His course—but soon his course was o'er!—
 High in his stirrups stood the King,
 And gave his battle-axe the swing.
 Right on De Boune, the whiles he pass'd,
 Fell that stern dint—the first—the last!—
 Such strength upon the blow was put,
 The helmet crash'd like hazel-nut;
 The axe-shaft, with its brazen clasp,
 Was shiver'd to the gauntlet grasp.
 Springs from the blow the startled horse,
 Drops to the plain the lifeless corse;
 —First of that fatal field, how soon,
 How sudden fell the fierce De Boune!

XVI.

One pitying glance the Monarch sped,
 Where on the field his foe lay dead;
 Then gently turn'd his palfrey's head,
 And, pacing back his sober way,
 Slowly he gain'd his own array.
 There round their King the leaders crowd,
 And blame his recklessness aloud,
 That risk'd 'gainst each adventurous spear
 A life so valued and so dear.—
 His broken weapon's shaft survey'd
 The King, and careless answer made,—
 "My loss may pay my folly's tax;
 I've broke my trusty battle-axe."
 'Twas then Fitz-Louis bending low,
 Did Isabel's commission show;
 Edith, disguised at distance stands,
 And hides her blushes with her hands.
 The Monarch's brow has changed its hue,
 Away the gory axe he threw,
 While to the seeming page he drew,
 Clearing war's terrors from his eye.
 Her hand with gentle ease he took,
 With such a kind protecting look,
 As to a weak and timid boy
 Might speak that elder brother's care,
 And elder brother's love was there.

XVII.

"Fear not," he said, "young Amadine!
 Then whisper'd—"Still that name be thine.
 Fate plays her wonted fantasy,
 Kind Amadine, with thee and me,
 And sends thee here in doubtful hour.
 But soon we are beyond her power;

For on this chosen battle-plain,
Victor or vanquish'd, I remain.
Do thou to yonder hill repair;
The followers of our host are there,
And all who may not weapons bear. —
Fitz-Louis, have him in thy care. —
Joyful we meet, if all go well;
If not, in Arran's holy cell
Thou must take part with Isabel;
For brave Lord Ronald, too, hath sworn.
Not to regain the Maid of Lorn,
(The bless on earth he covets most,)
Would he forsake his battle-post,
Or shun the fortune that may fall
To Bruce, to Scotland, and to all. —
But, hark! some news these trumpets tell;
Forgive my haste—farewell!—farewell!"
And in a lower voice he said,
"Be of good cheer—farewell, sweet maid!"—

XVIII.

"What train of dust, with trumpet-sound
And glimmering spears, is wheeling round
Our leftward flank?"—the Monarch cried,
To Moray's Earl, who rode beside.
"Lo! round thy station pass the foes!
Randolph, thy wreath hath lost a rose."
The Earl his visor closed, and said—
"My wreath shall bloom, or life shall fade. —
Follow, my household!"—And they go
Like lightning on the advancing foe.
"My Liege," said noble Douglas then,
"Earl Randolph has but one to ten:
Let me go forth his band to aid!"—
—"Stir not. The error he hath made,
Let him amend it as he may;
I will not weaken mine array."
Then loudly rose the conflict-cry,
And Douglas's brave heart swell'd high. —
"My liege," he said, "with patient ear
I must not Moray's death-knell hear!" —
"Then go—but speed thee back again." —
Forth sprung the Douglas with his train:
But, when they won a rising hill,
He bade his followers hold them still. —
"See, see! the routed Southern fly!
The Earl hath won the victory.
Lo! where yon steeds run masterless,
His banner towers above the press.
Rein up; our presence would impair
The fame we come too late to share."
Back to the host the Douglas rode,
And soon glad tidings are abroad,
That, Dayncourt by stout Randolph slain,
His followers fled with loosen'd rein. —

That skirmish closed the busy day,
And couch'd in battle's prompt array,
Each army on their weapons lay.

XIX.

It was a night of lovely June,
High rode in cloudless blue the moon,
Demayet smiled beneath her ray;
Old Stirling's towers arose in light,
And, twined in links of silver bright,
Her winding river lay.
Ah! gentle planet! other sight
Shall greet thee next returning night,
Of broken arms and banners tore,
And marshes dark with human gore,
And piles of slaughter'd men and horse,
And Forth that floats the frequent corse,
And many a wounded wretch to plain
Beneath thy silver light in vain!
But now, from England's host, the cry
Thou hear'st of wassail revelry,
While from the Scottish legions pass
The murmur'd prayer, the early mass!—
Here, numbers had presumption given;
There, bands o'er-match'd sought aid from Heaven.

XX.

On Gillie's-hill, whose height commands
The battle-field, fair Edith stands,
With serf and page unfit for war,
To eye the conflict from afar.
O! with what doubtful agony
She sees the dawning tint the sky!—
Now on the Ochils gleams the sun,
And glistens now Demayet dun;
Is it the lark that carols shrill,
Is it the bittern's early hum?
No!—distant, but increasing still,
The trumpet's sound swells up the hill,
With the deep murmur of the drum.
Responsive from the Scottish host,
Pipe-clang and bugle sound were toss'd,
His breast and brow each soldier cross'd,
And started from the ground;
Arm'd and array'd for instant fight,
Rose archer, spearman, squire, and knight,
And in the pomp of battle bright
The dread battalia frown'd.

XXI.

Now onward, and in open view,
The countless ranks of England drew,
Dark rolling like the ocean-tide,
When the rough west hath chafed his pride,
And his deep roar sends challenge wide

To all that bars his way!
In front the gallant archers trode,
The men-at-arms behind them rode,
And midmost of the phalanx broad
The Monarch held his sway.
Beside him many a war-horse fumes,
Around him waves a sea of plumes,
Where many a knight in battle known,
And some who spurs had first braced on,
And deem'd that fight should see them won,
King Edward's hests obey.
De Argentine attends his side,
With stout De Valence, Pembroke's pride,
Selected champions from the train,
To wait upon his bridle-rein.
Upon the Scottish foe he gazed—
—At once, before his sight amazed,
Sunk banner, spear, and shield;
Each weapon-point is downward sent,
Each warrior to the ground is bent.
“The rebels, Argentine, repent!
For pardon they have kneel'd.”—
“Aye!—but they bend to other powers,
And other pardon sue than ours!
See where yon bare-foot Abbot stands,
And blesses them with lifted hands!”
Upon the spot where they have kneel'd,
These men will die, or win the field.”—
—“Then prove we if they die or win!
Bid Gloster's Earl the fight begin.”

XXII.

Earl Gilbert waved his truncheon high,
Just as the Northern ranks arose,
Signal for England's archery
To halt and bend their bows.
Then stepp'd each yeoman forth a pace,
Glanced at the intervening space,
And raised his left hand high;
To the right ear the cords they bring—
—At once ten thousand bow-strings ring,
Ten thousand arrows fly!
Nor paused on the devoted Scot
The ceaseless fury of their shot;
As fiercely and as fast,
Forth whistling came the grey goose wing
As the wild hailstones pelt and ring
Adown December's blast.
Nor mountain targe of tough bull-hide,
Nor lowland mail, that storm may bide:
Woe, woe to Scotland's banner'd pride,
If the fell shower may last!
Upon the right, behind the wood,
Each by his steed dismounted, stood
The Scottish chivalry:—

With foot in stirrup, hand on mane,
Fierce Edward Bruce can scarce restrain
His own keen heart, his eager train,
Until the archers gain'd the plain;

Then, "Mount, ye gallants free!"
He cried; and, vaulting from the ground,
His saddle every horseman found.
On high their glittering crests they toss,
As springs the wild-fire from the moss;
The shield hangs down on every breast,
Each ready lance is in the rest,

And loud shouts Edward Bruce—
"Forth, Marshal! on the peasant foe!
We'll tame the terrors of their bow,
And cut the bow-string loose!"

XXIII.

Then spurs were dash'd in chargers' flanks,
They rush'd among the archer ranks,
No spears were there the shock to let,
No stakes to turn the charge were set,
And how shall yeoman's armour slight,
Stand the long lance and mace of might?
Or what may their short swords avail,
'Gainst barbed horse and shirt of mail?
Amid their ranks the chargers sprung,
High o'er their heads the weapons swung,
And shriek and groan and vengeful shout
Give note of triumph and of rout!
Awhile, with stubborn hardihood,
Their English hearts the strife made good.
Borne down at length on every side,
Compell'd to flight, they scatter wide.—
Let stags of Sherwood leap for glee,
And bound the deer of Dallom-Lee!
The broken bows of Bannock's shore
Shall in the greenwood ring no more!
Round Wakefield's merry May-pole now,
The maids may twine the summer bough,
May northward look with longing glance,
For those that wont to lead the dance,
For the blithe archers look in vain!
Broken, dispersed, in flight o'erta'en,
Pierced through, trode down, by thousands slain,
They cumber Bannock's bloody plain.

XXIV.

The King with scorn beheld their flight.
"Are these," he said, "our yeomen wight?
Each braggart churl could boast before,
Twelve Scottish lives his baldric bore!"⁴⁸
Fitter to plunder chase or park,
Than make a manly foe their mark.—
Forward, each gentleman and knight!

Let gentle blood show generous might,
And chivalry redeem the fight!"
To rightward of the wild affray,
The field show'd fair and level way;
But, in mid-space, the Bruce's care
Had bored the ground with many a pit,
With turf and brushwood hidden yet,
That form'd a ghastly snare.
Rushing, ten thousand horsemen came,
With spears in rest, and hearts on flame,
That panted for the shock!
With blazing crests and banners spread,
And trumpet-clang and clamour dread,
The wide plain thunder to their tread,
As far as Stirling rock.
Down! down! in headlong overthrow,
Horseman and horse, the foremost go;⁴⁹
Wild floundering on the field!
The first are in destruction's gorge,
Their followers wildly o'er them urge;—
The knightly helm and shield,
The mail, the acton, and the spear,
Strong hand, high heart, are useless here!
Loud, from the mass confused, the cry
Of dying warriors swells on high,
And steeds that shriek in agony!⁵⁰
They came like mountain-torrent red,
That thunders o'er its rocky bed;
They broke like that same torrent's wave
When swallow'd by a darksome cave.
Billows on billows burst and boil,
Maintaining still the stern turmoil,
And to their wild and tortured groan
Each adds new terrors of his own!

XXV.

Too strong in courage and in might
Was England yet, to yield the fight.
Her noblest all are here;
Names that to fear were never known,
Bold Norfolk's Earl De Brotherton,
And Oxford's famed De Vere.
There Gloster plied the bloody sword,
And Berkley, Grey, and Hereford,
Bottetourt and Sanzavere,
Ross, Montague, and Mauley, came,
And Courtenay's pride, and Percy's fame—
Names known too well in Scotland's war,
At Falkirk, Methven, and Dunbar,
Blazed broader yet in after years,
At Cressy red and fell Poitiers.
Pembroke with these, and Argentine,
Brought up the rearward battle-line.
With caution o'er the ground they tread,
Slippery with blood and piled with dead,

Till hand to hand in battle set,
 The bills with spears and axes met,
 And, closing dark on every side,
 Raged the full contest far and wide.
 Then was the strength of Douglas tried,
 Then proved was Randolph's generous pride,
 And well did Stewart's actions grace
 The sire of Scotland's royal race!

Firmly they kept their ground;
 As firmly England onward press'd,
 And down went many a noble crest,
 And rent was many a valiant breast,
 And Slaughter revell'd round.

XXVI.

Unflinching foot 'gainst foot was set,
 Unceasing blow by blow was met;
 The groans of those who fell
 Were drown'd amid the shriller clang
 That from the blades and harness rang,
 And in the battle-yell.
 Yet fast they fell, unheard, forgot,
 Both Southern fierce and hardy Scot;
 And O! amid that waste of life,
 What various motives fired the strife!
 The aspiring Noble bled for fame,
 The Patriot for his country's claim;
 This Knight his youthful strength to prove,
 And that to win his lady's love;
 Some fought from ruffian thirst of blood,
 From habit some, or hardihood.
 But ruffian stern, and soldier good,
 The noble and the slave,
 From various cause the same wild road,
 On the same bloody morning, trode,
 To that dark inn, the grave!

XXVII.

The tug of strife to flag begins,
 Though neither loses yet, nor wins.
 High rides the sun, thick rolls the dust,
 And feebler speeds the blow and thrust.
 Douglas leans on his war-sword now,
 And Randolph wipes his bloody brow;
 Nor less had toll'd each Southern knight
 From morn till mid-day in the fight.
 Strong Egremont for air must gasp,
 Beauchamp undoes his visor-clasp,
 And Montague must quit his spear,
 And sinks thy falchion, bold De Vere!
 The blows of Berkley fall less fast,
 And gallant Pembroke's bugle-blast
 Hath lost its lively tone;
 Sinks, Argentine, thy battle-word,

And Percy's shout was fainter heard
"My merry-men, fight on!"

XXVIII.

Bruce, with the pilot's wary eye,
The slackening of the storm could spy :—
"One effort more, and Scotland's free!
Lord of the Isles, my trust in thee
Is firm as Ailsa Rock;
Rush on with Highland sword and targe,
I, with my Carrick spearmen, charge;"⁶¹
Now, forward to the shock!"
At once the spears were forward thrown,
Against the sun the broadswords shone;
The pibroch lent its maddening tone,
And loud King Robert's voice was known—
"Carrick, press on—they fail, they fail!
Press on, brave sons of Innisgail,
The foe is fainting fast!
Each strike for parent, child, and wife,
For Scotland, liberty, and life,—
The battle cannot last!"

XXIX.

The fresh and desperate onset bore
The foes three furlongs back and more,
Leaving their noblest in their gore.
Alone, De Argentine
Yet bears on high his red-cross shield,
Gathers the relics of the field,
Renews the ranks where they have reel'd,
And still makes good the line.
Brief strife, but fierce,—his efforts raise
A bright but momentary blaze.
Fair Edith heard the Southern shout,
Beheld them turning from the rout,
Heard the wild call their trumpets sent,
In notes 'twixt triumph and lament.
That rallying force combined anew,
Appear'd in her distracted view,
To hem the Islesmen round :
"O God the combat they renew,
And is no rescue found!
And ye that look thus tamely on,
And see your native land o'erthrown,
O! are your hearts of flesh or stone?"

XXX.

The multitude that watch'd afar,
Rejected from the ranks of war,
Had not unmoved beheld the fight,
When strove the Bruce for Scotland's right;
Each heart had caught the patriot spark,
Old man and stripling, priest and clerk,

Bondsman and serf; even female hand
 Stretch'd to the hatchet or the brand;
 But, when mute Amadine they heard
 Give to their zeal his signal-word,
 A frenzy fired the throng;—
 "Portents and miracles impeach
 Our sloth—the dumb our duties teach—
 And he that gives the mute his speech,
 Can bid the weak be strong.
 To us, as to our lords, are given
 A native earth, a promised heaven;
 To us, as to our lords, belongs
 The vengeance for our nation's wrongs;
 The choice, 'twixt death or freedom, warms
 Our breasts as theirs—To arms! to arms!"
 To arms they flew,—axe, club, or spear,—
 And mimic ensigns high they rear,³²
 And, like a banner'd host afar,
 Bear down on England's wearied war.

XXXI.

Already scatter'd o'er the plain,
 Reproof, command, and counsel vain,
 The rearward squadrons fled amain,
 Or made but doubtful stay;—
 But when they mark'd the seeming show
 Of fresh and fierce and marshall'd foe,
 The boldest broke array.—
 O give their hapless prince his due!
 In vain the royal Edward threw
 His person 'mid the spears,
 Cried, "Fight!" to terror and despair,
 Menaced, and wept, and tore his hair,
 And cursed their caitiff fears;
 Till Pembroke turn'd his bridle rein,
 And forced him from the fatal plain.
 With them rode Argentine, until
 They gain'd the summit of the hill,
 But quitted there the train:—
 "In yonder field a gage I left,—
 I must not live of fame bereft;
 I needs must turn again.
 Speed hence, my Liege, for on your trace
 The fiery Douglas takes the chase,
 I know his banner well.
 God send my Sovereign joy and bliss,
 And many a happier field than this!
 Once more, my Liege, farewell!"

XXXII.

Again he faced the battle-field,—
 Wildly they fly, are slain, or yield.
 "Now then," he said, and couch'd his spear,
 "My course is run, the goal is near:
 One effort more, one brave career,
 Must close this race of mine."

Then in his stirrups rising high,
 He shouted loud his battle-cry—
 "Saint James for Argentine!"
 And, of the bold pursuers, four
 The gallant knight from saddle bore;
 But not unharm'd—a lance's point
 Has found his breastplate's loosen'd joint,
 An axe has razed his crest;
 Yet still on Colonsay's fierce lord,
 Who press'd the chase with gory sword,
 He rode with spear in rest,
 And through his bloody tartans bored,
 And through his gallant breast.
 Nail'd to the earth, the mountaineer
 Yet writhed him up against the spear,
 And swung his broadsword round!
 —Stirrup, steel-boot, and cuish gave way
 Beneath that blow's tremendous sway,
 The blood gush'd from the wound;
 And the grim Lord of Colonsay
 Hath turn'd him on the ground.
 And laugh'd in death-pang, that his blade,
 The mortal thrust so well repaid.

XXXIII.

Now toil'd the Bruce, the battle done,
 To use his conquest boldly won;
 And gave command for horse and spear
 To press the Southron's scatter'd rear,
 Nor let his broken force combine,
 —When the war-cry of Argentine
 Fell faintly on his ear;—
 "Save, save his life," he cried, "O save
 The kind, the noble, and the brave!"
 The squadrons round free passage gave—
 The wounded knight drew near;
 He raised his red-cross shield no more,
 Helm, cuish, and breastplate stream'd with gore,
 Yet, as he saw the King advance,
 He strove even then to couch his lance—
 The effort was in vain!
 The spur-stroke fail'd to rouse the horse
 Wounded and weary, in mid course
 He stumbled on the plain.
 Then foremost was the generous Bruce
 To raise his head, his helm to loose;—
 "Lord Earl, the day is thine!
 My sovereign's charge, and adverse fate,
 Have made our meeting all too late:
 Yet this may Argentine,
 As boon from ancient comrade, crave—
 A Christian's mass, a soldier's grave."

XXXIV.

Bruce press'd his dying hand—its grasp
 Kindly replied; but, in his clasp,
 It stiffen'd and grew cold—
 "And, O farewell!" the victor cried,
 "Of chivalry the flower and pride,
 The arm in battle bold,
 The courteous mien, the noble race,
 The stainless faith, the manly face!--
 Bid Ninian's convent light their shrine,
 For late-wake of De Argentine.
 O'er better knight on death-bier laid,
 Torch never gleam'd, nor mass was said!"

XXXV.

Nor for De Argentine alone,
 Through Ninian's church these torches shone,
 And rose the death-prayer's awful tone.
 That yellow lustre glimmer'd pale,
 On broken plate and bloodied mail,
 Rent crest and shatter'd coronet,
 Of Baron, Earl, and Bannaret;
 And the best names that England knew,
 Claim'd in the death-prayer dismal due.
 Yet mourn not, Land of Fame!
 Though ne'er the Leopards on thy shield
 Retreated from so sad a field,
 Since Norman William came.
 Oft may thine annals justly boast
 Of battle's stern by Scotland lost;
 Grudge not her victory,
 When for her freeborn rights she strove—
 Rights dear to all who freedom love,
 To none so dear as thee!

XXXVI.

Turn we to Bruce, whose curious ear
 Must from Fitz-Louis tidings hear;
 With him, a hundred voices tell
 Of prodigy and miracle,
 "For the mute page had spoke."—
 "Page!" said Fitz-Louis,—rather say,
 An angel sent from realms of day,
 To burst the English yoke.
 I saw his plume and bonnet drop,
 When hurrying from the mountain top,
 A lovely brow, dark locks that wave,
 To his bright eyes new lustre gave,
 A step as light upon the green,
 As if his pinions waved unseen!"—
 "Spoke he with none?"—"With none—one word
 Burst when he saw the Island Lord,
 Returning from the battle-field."—
 "What answer made the Chief?"—"He kneel'd.

Durst not look up, but mutter'd low,
Some mingled sounds that none might know,
And greeted him 'twixt joy and fear,
As being of superior sphere."

XXXVII.

Even upon Bannock's bloody plain,
Heap'd then with thousands of the slain,
'Mid victor monarch's musings high,
Mirth laugh'd in good King Robert's eye:—
"And bore he such angelic air,
Such noble front, such waving hair?
Hath Ronald kneel'd to him?" he said;
"Then must we call the church to aid—
Our will be to the Abbot known,
Ere these strange news are wider blown,
To Cambuskenneth straight ye pass,
And deck the church for solemn mass,
To pay for high deliverance given,
A nation's thanks to gracious Heaven.
Let him array, besides, such state,
As should on princes' nuptials wait.
Ourself the cause, through fortune's spite,
That once broke short that spousal rite,
Ourself will grace, with early morn,
The Bridal of the Maid of Lorn."^a

CONCLUSION.

Go forth, my Song, upon thy venturous way;
Go boldly forth; nor yet thy master blame,
Who chose no patron for his humble lay,
And graced thy numbers with no friendly name,
Whose partial zeal might smooth thy path to fame.
There was—and O! how many sorrows crowd
Into these two brief words!—*there was* a claim
By generous friendship given—had fate allow'd
It well had bid thee rank the proudest of the proud!

^a "To Mr. James Ballantyne.—Dear Sir,—You have now the whole affair, excepting two or three concluding stanzas. As your taste for bride's-cake may induce you to desire to know more of the wedding, I will save you some criticism by saying, I have settled to stop short as above.—Witness my hand,
"W. S."

All angel now—yet little less than all,
While still a pilgrim in our world below !
What 'vails it us that patience to recall,
Which hid its own to soothe all other woes ;
What 'vails to tell, how Virtue's purest glow
Shone yet more lovely in a form so fair !
And, least of all, what 'vails the world should know,
That one poor garland, twined to deck thy hair,
Is hung upon thy hearse, to droop and wither there !



THE DEATH OF ARGENTINE.

*Bruce pressed his dying hand—its grasp
Kindly replied: but in his clasp,
It stiffened and grew cold.*



THE BRIDAL

OF

TRIERMAIN :

OR,

THE VALE OF ST. JOHN.

A LOVER'S TALE.



PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION.

IN the EDINBURGH ANNUAL REGISTER for the year 1809, Three Fragments were inserted, written in imitation of Living Poets. It must have been apparent, that by these prolusions, nothing burlesque, or disrespectful to the authors, was intended, but that they were offered to the public as serious, though certainly very imperfect, imitations of that style of composition, by which each of the writers is supposed to be distinguished. As these exercises attracted a greater degree of attention than the author anticipated, he has been induced to complete one of them, and present it as a separate publication.

It is not in this place that an examination of the works of the master whom he has here adopted as his model, can, with propriety, be introduced; since his general acquiescence in the favourable suffrage of the public must necessarily be inferred from the attempt he has now made. He is induced, by the nature of his subject, to offer a few remarks on what has been called ROMANTIC POETRY;—the popularity of which has been revived in the present day, under the auspices, and by the unparalleled success, of one individual.

The original purpose of poetry is either religious or historical, or, as must frequently happen, a mixture of both. To modern readers, the poems of Homer have many of the features of pure romance; but in the estimation of his contemporaries, they probably derived their chief value from their supposed historical authenticity. The same may be generally said of the poetry of all early ages. The marvels and miracles which the poet blends with his song, do not exceed in number or extravagance the fragments of the historians of the same period of society; and, indeed, the difference betwixt poetry and prose, as the vehicles of historical truth, is always of late introduction. Poets, under various denominations of Bards, Scalds, Chroniclers, and so forth, are the first historians of all nations. Their intention is to relate the events they have witnessed, or the traditions that have reached them; and they clothe the relation in rhyme, merely as the means of rendering it more solemn in the narrative or more easily committed to memory. But as the poetical historian improves in the art of conveying information, the authen-

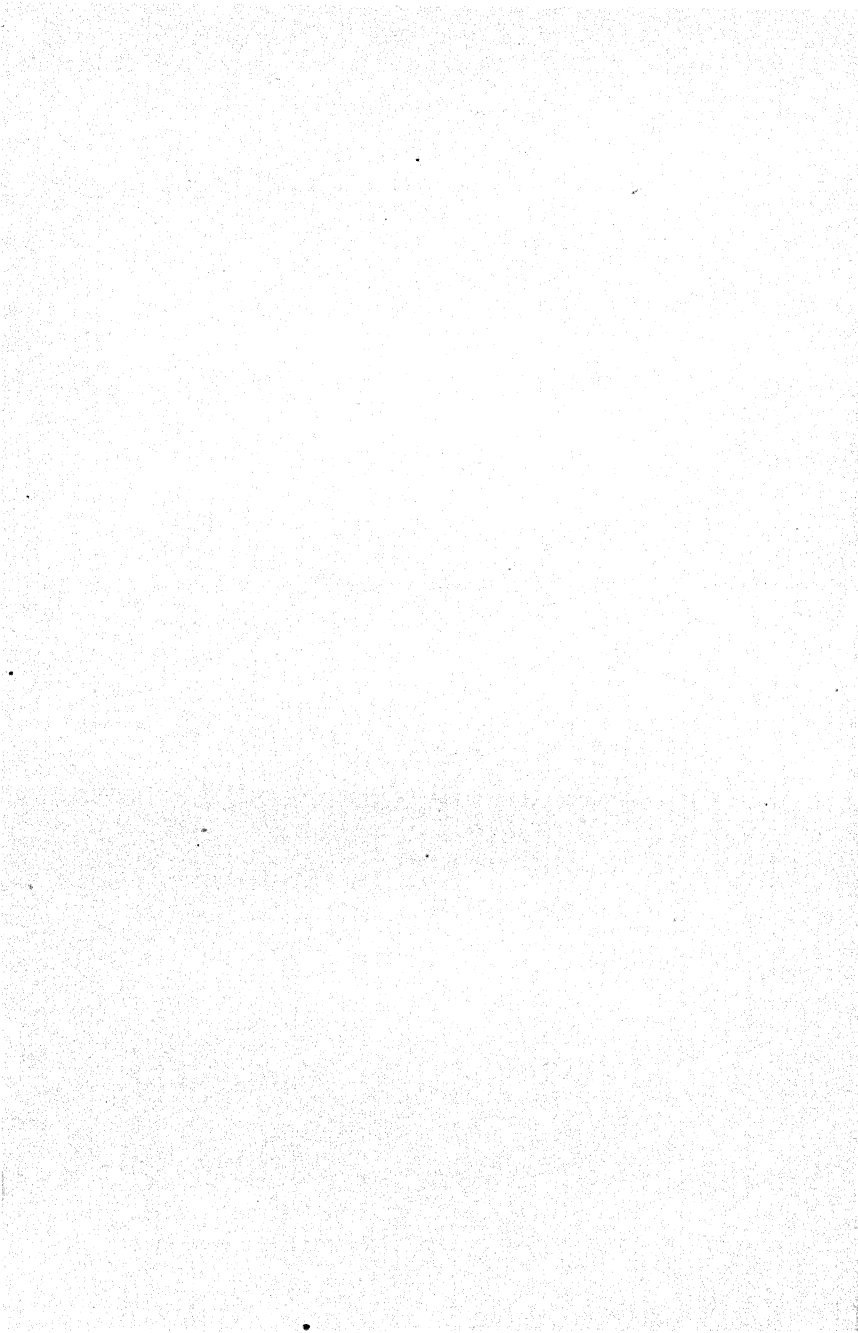
ticity of his narrative unavoidably declines. He is tempted to dilate, and dwell upon the events that are interesting to his imagination, and, conscious how indifferent his audience is to the naked truth of his poem, his history gradually becomes a romance.

It is in this situation that those epics are found, which have been generally regarded the standards of poetry; and it has happened somewhat strangely, that the moderns have pointed out as the characteristics and peculiar excellencies of narrative poetry, the very circumstances which the authors themselves adopted, only because their art involved the duties of the historian as well as the poet. It cannot be believed, for example, that Homer selected the siege of Troy as the most appropriate subject for poetry; his purpose was to write the early history of his country; the event he has chosen, though not very fruitful in varied incident, nor perfectly well adapted for poetry, was nevertheless combined with traditionary and genealogical anecdotes extremely interesting to those who were to listen to him; and this he has adorned by the exertions of a genius, which, if it has been equalled, has certainly been never surpassed. It was not till comparatively a late period that the general accuracy of his narrative, or his purpose in composing it, was brought into question. Δοκεῖ πρῶτος [ὁ Ἀναξαγόρας] (καθὰ φησι Φαβρίκιος ἐν παντοδαπῇ Ἱστορίᾳ) τὴν Ὅμηρον ποιῆσαι ἀποφύρασθαι εἶναι περὶ ἀρετῆς καὶ δικαιοσύνης. But whatever theories might be framed by speculative men, his work was of an historical, not of an allegorical nature. Ἐναντίλλετο μετὰ τοῦ Μέντεω καὶ ὅπου ἐκάστοτε ἀφίκοντο, πάντα τὰ ἐπιχόρτια διερωτᾶτο, καὶ ἱστορίων ἐπυνθάνετο· εἰκὸς δὲ μὴν ἢ καὶ μνημοσύνην πάντων γράφεσθαι. Instead of recommending the choice of a subject similar to that of Homer, it was to be expected that critics should have exhorted the poets of these latter days to adopt or invent a narrative in itself more susceptible of poetical ornament, and to avail themselves of that advantage in order to compensate, in some degree, the inferiority of genius. The contrary course has been inculcated by almost all the writers upon the *Εποποιεῖα*; with what success, the fate of Homer's numerous imitators may best show. The *ultimum supplicium* of criticism was inflicted on the author if he did not choose a subject which at once deprived him of all claim to originality, and placed him, if not in actual contest, at least in fatal comparison, with those giants in the land whom it was most his interest to avoid. The celebrated receipt for writing an epic poem, which appeared in *The Guardian*, was the first instance in which common sense was applied to this department of poetry; and, indeed, if the question be considered on its own merits, we must be satisfied that narrative poetry, if strictly confined to the great occurrences of history, would be deprived of the individual interest which it is so well calculated to excite.

Modern poets may therefore be pardoned in seeking simpler subjects of verse, more interesting in proportion to their simplicity. Two or three figures, well grouped, suit the artist better than a crowd, for whatever purpose assembled. For the same reason, a scene immediately presented to the imagination, and directly brought home to the feelings, though involving the

fate of but one or two persons, is more favourable for poetry than the political struggles and convulsions which influence the fate of kingdoms. The former are within the reach and comprehension of all, and, if depicted with vigour, seldom fail to fix attention : The other, if more sublime, are more vague and distant, less capable of being distinctly understood, and infinitely less capable of exciting those sentiments which it is the very purpose of poetry to inspire. To generalise is always to destroy effect. We would, for example, be more interested in the fate of an individual soldier in combat, than in the grand event of a general action ; with the happiness of two lovers raised from misery and anxiety to peace and union, than with the successful exertions of a whole nation. From what causes this may originate, is a separate and obviously an immaterial consideration. Before ascribing this peculiarity to causes decidedly and odiously selfish, it is proper to recollect, that while men see only a limited space, and while their affections and conduct are regulated, not by aspiring to an universal good, but by exerting their power of making themselves and others happy within the limited scale allotted to each individual, so long will individual history and individual virtue be the readier and more accessible road to general interest and attention ; and, perhaps, we may add, that it is the more useful, as well as the more accessible, inasmuch as it affords an example capable of being easily imitated.

According to the author's idea of Romantic Poetry, as distinguished from Epic, the former comprehends a fictitious narrative, framed and combined at the pleasure of the writer ; beginning and ending as he may judge best : which neither exacts nor refuses the use of supernatural machinery ; which is free from the technical rules of the *Epic* ; and is subject only to those which good sense, good taste, and good morals, apply to every species of poetry without exception. The date may be in a remote age, or in the present ; the story may detail the adventures of a prince or of a peasant. In a word, the author is absolute master of his country and its inhabitants, and everything is permitted to him, excepting to be heavy or prosaic, for which, free and unembarrassed as he is, he has no manner of apology. Those, it is probable, will be found the peculiarities of this species of composition ; and before joining the outcry against the vitiated taste that fosters and encourages it, the justice and grounds of it ought to be made perfectly apparent. If the want of sieges, and battles, and great military evolutions, in our poetry, is complained of, let us reflect, that the campaigns and heroes of our days are perpetuated in a record that neither requires nor admits of the aid of fiction ; and if the complaint refers to the inferiority of our bards, let us pay a just tribute to their modesty, limiting them, as it does, to subjects which, however indifferently treated, have still the interest and charm of novelty, and which thus prevents them from adding insipidity to their other more insuperable defects.



THE
BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN.

INTRODUCTION.

I.

COME, LUCY! while 'tis morning hour,
The woodland brook we needs must pass;
So, ere the sun assume his power,
We shelter in our poplar bower,
Where dew lies long upon the flower,
Though vanish'd from the velvet grass.
Curbing the stream, this stony ridge
May serve us for a silvan bridge;
For here compell'd to disunite,
Round petty isles the runnels glide,
And chafing off their puny spite,
The shallow murmurers waste their might,
Yielding to footstep free and light
A dry-shod pass from side to side.

II.

Nay, why this hesitating pause?
And, Lucy, as thy step withdraws,
Why sidelong eye the streamlet's brim?
Titania's foot without a slip,
Like thine, though timid, light, and slim,
From stone to stone might safely trip,
Nor risk the glow-worm clasp to dip
That binds her slipper's silken rim.
Or trust thy lover's strength: nor fear
That this same stalwart arm of mine,
Which could yon oak's prone trunk uprear,
Shall shrink beneath the burden dear
Of form so slender, light, and fine—
So,—now, the danger dared at last,
Look back, and smile at perils past!

III.

And now we reach the favourite glade.
Paled in by copsewood, cliff, and stone,
Where never harsher sounds invade,
To break affection's whispering tone,
Than the deep breeze that waves the shade,
Than the small brooklet's feeble moan.
Come! rest thee on thy wonted seat,
Moss'd is the stone, the turf is green,
A place where lovers best may meet,
Who would that not their love be seen.
The boughs, that dim the summer sky,
Shall hide us from each lurking spy,
That fain would spread the invidious tale,
How Lucy of the lofty eye,
Noble in birth, in fortunes high,
She for whom lords and barons sigh,
Meets her poor Arthur in the dale.

IV.

How deep that blush!—how deep that sigh
And why does Lucy shun mine eye?
Is it because that crimson draws
Its colour from some secret cause,
Some hidden movement of the breast,
She would not that her Arthur guess'd?
O! quicker far is lovers' ken
Than the dull glance of common men,
And, by strange sympathy, can spell
The thoughts the loved one will not tell!
And mine, in Lucy's blush, saw met
The hues of pleasure and regret;
Pride mingled in the sigh her voice,
And shared with Love the crimson glow;
Well pleased that thou art Arthur's choice,
Yet shamed thine own is placed so low;
Thou turn'st thy self-confessing cheek,
As if to meet the breeze's cooling;
Then, Lucy, hear thy tutor speak,
For Love, too, has his hours of schooling.

V.

Too oft my anxious eye has spied
That secret grief thou fain wouldst hide,
The passing pang of humbled pride;
Too oft, when through the splendid hall,
The load-star of each heart and eye,
My fair one leads the glittering ball,
Will her stol'n glance on Arthur fall,
With such a blush and such a sigh!
Thou wouldst not yield, for wealth or rank,
The heart thy worth and beauty won,
Nor leave me on this mossy bank,
To meet a rival on a throne:

Why, then, should vain repinings rise,
 That to thy lover fate denies
 A nobler name, a wide domain,
 A Baron's birth, a menial train,
 Since Heaven assign'd him, for his part,
 A lyre, a falchion, and a heart?

VI.

My sword—its master must be dumb;
 But, when a soldier names my name,
 Approach, my Lucy! fearless come,
 Nor dread to hear of Arthur's shame.
 My heart—'mid all yon courtly crew,
 Of lordly rank and lofty line,
 Is there to love and honour true,
 That boasts a pulse so warm as mine?
 They praised thy diamonds' lustre rare—
 Match'd with thine eyes, I thought it faded;
 They praised the pearls that bound thy hair—
 I only saw the locks they braided;
 They talk'd of wealthy dower and laud,
 And titles of high birth the token—
 I thought of Lucy's heart and hand,
 Nor knew the sense of what was spoken.
 And yet, if rank'd in Fortune's roll,
 I might have learn'd their choice unwise,
 Who rate the dower above the soul,
 And Lucy's diamonds o'er her eyes.

VII.

My lyre—it is an idle toy,
 That borrows accents not its own,
 Like warbler of Colombian sky,
 That sings but in a mimic tone.
 Ne'er did it sound o'er sainted well,
 Nor boasts it aught of Border spell;
 Its strings no feudal slogan pour,
 Its heroes draw no broad claymore;
 No shouting clans applauses raise,
 Because it sung their father's praise;
 On Scottish moor, or English down,
 It ne'er was graced by fair renown;
 Nor won,—best meed to minstrel true,—
 One favouring smile from fair BUCCLEUCH!
 By one poor streamlet sounds its tone,
 And heard by one dear maid alone.

VIII.

But, if thou bid'st, these tones shall tell
 Of errant knight, and damozelle;
 Of the dread knot a Wizard tied,
 In punishment of maiden's pride,
 In notes of marvel and of fear,
 That best may charm romantic ear.

For Lucy loves,—like COLLINS, ill-starr'd name,
Whose lay's requital, was that tardy fame,
Who bound no laurel round his living head,
Should hang it o'er his monument when dead,—
For Lucy loves to tread enchanted strand,
And thread, like him, the maze of fairy land;
Of golden battlements to view the gleam,
And slumber soft by some Elysian stream;
Such lays she loves,—and, such my Lucy's choice,
What other song can claim her Poet's voice?

THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN.

CANTO FIRST.

I.

WHERE is the Maiden of mortal strain,
That may match with the Baron of Triermain?
She must be lovely, and constant, and kind,
Holy and pure, and humble of mind,
Blithe of cheer, and gentle of mood,
Courteous, and generous, and noble of blood—
Lovely as the sun's first ray,
When it breaks the clouds of an April day;
Constant and true as the widow'd dove,
Kind as a minstrel that sings of love;
Pure as the fountain in rocky cave,
Where never sunbeam kiss'd the wave;
Humble as maiden that loves in vain,
Holy as hermit's vesper strain;
Gentle as breeze that but whispers and dies,
Yet blithe as the light leaves that dance in its sighs;
Courteous as monarch the morn he is crown'd,
Generous as spring-dews that bless the glad ground;
Noble her blood as the currents that met
In the veins of the noblest Plantagenet—
Such must her form be, her mood, and her strain,
That shall match with Sir Roland of Triermain.

II.

Sir Roland de Vaux he hath laid him to sleep,
His blood it was fever'd, his breathing was deep
He had been pricking against the Scot,
The foray was long, and the skirmish hot;
His dinted helm and his buckler's plight
Bore token of a stubborn fight.
All in the castle must hold them still,
Harpers must lull him to his rest,
With the slow soft tunes he loves the best,
Till sleep sink down upon his breast,
Like the dew on a summer hill.

III.

It was the dawn of an autumn day ;
The sun was struggling with frost-fog grey,
That like a silvery crape was spread
Round Skiddaw's dim and distant head,
And faintly gleam'd each painted pane
Of the lordly halls of Triermaln,

When that Baron bold awoke.
Starting he woke, and loudly did call,
Rousing his menials in bower and hall,
While hastily he spoke.

IV.

"Hearken, my minstrels ! Which of ye all
Touch'd his harp with that dying fall,

So sweet, so soft, so faint,
It seem'd an angel's whisper'd call
To an expiring saint ?

And hearken, my merry-men ! What time or where
Did she pass, that maid with her heavenly brow,
With her look so sweet and her eyes so fair,
And her graceful step and her angel air,
And the eagle plume in her dark-brown hair,
That pass'd from my bower e'en now ?"

V.

Answer'd him Richard de Bretville ; he
Was chief of the Baron's minstrelsy,—
"Silent, noble chieftain, we

Have sat since midnight close,
When such lulling sounds as the brooklet sings,
Murmur'd from our melting strings,

And hush'd you to repose.
Had a harp-note sounded here,
It had caught my watchful ear,
Although it fell as faint and shy
As bashful maiden's half-form'd sigh,
When she thinks her lover near."

Answer'd Philip of Fasthwaite tall,
He kept guard in the outer-hall,—

"Since at eve our watch took post,
Not a foot has thy portal cross'd ;
Else had I heard the steps, though low
And light they fell, as when earth receives,
In morn of frost, the wither'd leaves,
That drop when no winds blow."

VI.

"Then come thou hither, Henry, my page,
Whom I saved from the sack of Hermitage,
When that dark castle, tower, and spire,
Rose to the skies a pile of fire,
And redden'd all the Nine-stane Hill,

And the shrieks of death, that wildly broke
 Through devouring flame and smothering smoke,
 Made the warrior's heart-blood chill.
 The trustiest thou of all my train,
 My fleetest courser thou must rein,
 And ride to Lyulph's tower,
 And from the Baron of Triermaln
 Greet well that sage of power.
 He is sprung from Druid sires,
 And British bards that tuned their lyres
 To Arthur's and Pendragon's praise,
 And his who sleeps at Dunmailraise.
 Gifted like his gifted race,
 He the characters can trace,
 Graven deep in elder time
 Upon Hellvellyn's cliffs sublime
 Sign and sigil well doth he know
 And can bode of weal and woe,
 Of kingdoms' fall and fate of wars,
 From mystic dreams and course of stars.
 He shall tell if middle earth
 To that enchanting shape gave birth,
 Or if 'twas but an airy thing,
 Such as fantastic slumbers bring,
 Framed from the rainbow's varying dyes,
 Or fading tints of western skies.
 For, by the Blessed Rood I swear,
 If that fair form breathe vital air,
 No other maiden by my side
 Shall ever rest De Vaux's bride!"

VII.

The faithful Page he mounts his steed,
 And soon he cross'd green Irthing's mead,
 Dash'd o'er Kirkoswald's verdant plain,
 And Eden barr'd his course in vain.
 He pass'd red Penrith's Table Round,¹
 For feats of chivalry renown'd,
 Left Mayburgh's mound and stones of power,²
 By Druids raised in magic hour,
 And traced the Eamont's winding way,
 Till Ulfo's lake beneath him lay.

VIII.

Onward he rode, the pathway still
 Winding betwixt the lake and hill;
 Till, on the fragment of a rock,
 Struck from its base by lightning shock,
 He saw the hoary Sage:
 The silver moss and lichen twined,
 With fern and deer-hair check'd and lined,
 A cushion fit for age;
 And o'er him shook the aspin-tree,
 A restless rustling canopy.

Then sprung young Henry from his selle,
 And greeted Lyulph grave,
 And then his master's tale did tell,
 And then for counsel crave.
 The Man of Years mused long and deep,
 Of time's lost treasures taking keep,
 And then, as rousing from a sleep,
 His solemn answer gave.

IX.

"That maid is born of middle earth,
 And may of man be won,
 Though there have glided since her birth
 Five hundred years and one.
 But where's the Knight in all the north,
 That dare the adventure follow forth,
 So perilous to knightly worth,
 In the valley of St John?
 Listen, youth, to what I tell,
 And bind it on thy memory well;
 Nor muse that I commence the rhyme
 Far distant 'mid the wrecks of time.
 The mystic tale, by bard and sage,
 Is handed down from Merlin's age.

X.

Lyulph's Tale.

"KING ARTHUR has ridden from merry Carlisle
 When Pentecost was o'er:
 He journey'd like errant-knight the while,
 And sweetly the summer sun did smile
 On mountain, moss, and moor.
 Above his solitary track
 Rose Glaramara's ridgy back,
 Amid whose yawning gulfs the sun
 Cast umber'd radiance red and dun,
 Though never sunbeam could discern
 The surface of that sable tarn,
 In whose black mirror you may spy
 The stars, while noontide lights the sky.
 The gallant King he skirted still
 The margin of that mighty hill;
 Rock upon rocks incumbent hung,
 And torrents, down the gullies flung,
 Join'd the rude river that brawl'd on,
 Recoiling now from crag and stone,
 Now diving deep from human ken,
 And raving down its darksome glen.
 The Monarch judged this desert wild,
 With such romantic ruin piled,
 Was theatre by Nature's hand
 For feat of high achievement plann'd.

XI.

"O rather he chose, that Monarch bold,
On vent'rous quest to ride,
In plate and mail, by wood and wold,
Than, with ermine trapp'd and cloth of gold,
In princely bower to bide ;
The bursting crash of a foeman's spear
As it shiver'd against his mail,
Was merrier music to his ear
Than courtier's whisper'd tale :
And the clash of Caliburn more dear,
When on the hostile casque it rung,
Than all the lays
To their monarch's praise,
That the harpers of Reged sung.
He loved better to rest by wood or river,
Than in bower of his bride, Dame Guenever,
For he left that lady, so lovely of cheer,
To follow adventures of danger and fear ;
And the frank-hearted Monarch full little did wot,
That she smiled, in his absence, on brave Lancelot.

XII.

"He rode, till over down and dell
The shade more broad and deeper fell ;
And though around the mountain's head
Flow'd streams of purple, and gold, and red,
Dark at the base, unblest by beam,
Frown'd the black rocks, and roar'd the stream
With toil the King his way pursued
By lonely Threlkeld's waste and wood,
Till on his course obliquely shone
The narrow valley of SAINT JOHN,
Down sloping to the western sky,
Where lingering sunbeams love to lie.
Right glad to feel those beams again,
The King drew up his charger's rein ;
With gauntlet raised he screen'd his sight,
As dazzled with the level light,
And, from beneath his glove of mail,
Scann'd at his ease the lovely vale,
While 'gainst the sun his armour bright
Gleam'd ruddy like the beacon's light.

XIII.

"Paled in by many a lofty hill,
The narrow dale lay smooth and still,
And, down its verdant bosom led,
A winding brooklet found its bed.
But, midmost of the vale, a mound
Arose with airy turrets crown'd,
Buttress, and rampire's circling bound,
And mighty keep and tower

Seem'd some primeval giant's hand
 The castle's massive walls had plann'd,
 A ponderous bulwark to withstand
 Ambitious Nimrod's power.
 Above the moated entrance slung,
 The balanced drawbridge trembling hung,
 As jealous of a foe;
 Wicket of oak, as iron hard,
 With iron studded, clench'd, and barr'd,
 And prong'd porteullis, joined to guard
 The gloomy pass below.
 But the grey walls no banners crown'd,
 Upon the watch-tower's airy round
 No warder stood his horn to sound,
 No guard beside the bridge was found,
 And, where the Gothic gateway frown'd.
 Glanced neither bill nor bow.

XIV.

"Beneath the castle's gloomy pride
 In ample round did Arthur ride
 Three times; nor living thing he spied,
 Nor heard a living sound,
 Save that, awakening from her dream,
 The owllet now began to scream,
 In concert with the rushing stream,
 That wash'd the battled mound.
 He lighted from his goodly steed,
 And he left him to graze on bank and mead:
 And slowly he climb'd the narrow way,
 That reached the entrance grim and grey,
 And he stood the outward arch below,
 And his bugle-horn prepared to blow.
 In summons blithe and bold,
 Deeming to rouse from iron sleep
 The guardian of this dismal Keep,
 Which well he guess'd the hold
 Of wizard stern, or goblin grim,
 Or pagan of gigantic limb,
 The tyrant of the wold.

XV.

"The ivory bugle's golden tip
 Twice touched the Monarch's manly lip,
 And twice his hand withdrew.
 —Think not but Arthur's heart was good!
 His shield was cross'd by the blessed rood,
 Had a pagan host before him stood,
 He had charged them through and through;
 Yet the silence of that ancient place
 Sunk on his heart, and he paused a space
 Ere yet his horn he blew.
 But, instant as its 'larum rung,
 The castle gate was open flung,

Portcullis rose with crashing groan
Full harshly up its groove of stone ;
The balance-beams obey'd the blast,
And down the trembling drawbridge cast ;
The vaulted arch before him lay,
With nought to bar the gloomy way,
And onward Arthur paced, with hand
On Caliburn's resistless brand.

XVI.

" A hundred torches, flashing bright,
Dispell'd at once the gloomy night
That lour'd along the walls,
And show'd the King's astonish'd sight
The inmates of the halls.
Nor wizard stern, nor goblin grim,
Nor giant huge of form and limb,
Nor heathen knight was there ;
But the cressets, which odours flung aloft,
Show'd by their yellow light and soft,
A band of damsels fair.
Onward they came, like summer wave
That dances to the shore ;
An hundred voices welcome gave,
And welcome o'er and o'er !
An hundred lovely hands assail
The bucklers of the monarch's mail,
And busy labour'd to unhasp
Rivet of steel and iron clasp.
One wrapp'd him in a mantle fair,
And one flung odours on his hair ;
His short curl'd ringlets one smooth'd down,
One wreathed them with a myrtle crown.
A bride upon her wedding-day,
Was tended ne'er by troop so gay.

XVII.

" Loud laugh'd they all,—the King, in vain,
With questions task'd the giddy train ;
Let him entreat, or crave, or call,
'Twas one reply,—loud laugh'd they all.
Then o'er him mimic chains they fling,
Framed of the fairest flowers of spring.
While some their gentle force unite,
Onward to drag the wondering knight ;
Some, bolder, urge his pace with blows,
Dealt with the lily or the rose.
Behind him were in triumph borne
The warlike arms he late had worn.
Four of the train combined to rear
The terrors of Tintadgel's spear ;
Two, laughing at their lack of strength,
Dragg'd Caliburn in cumbrous length ;

One, while she aped a martial stride,
 Placed on her brows the helmet's pride ;
 Then screamed, 'twixt laughter and surprise,
 To feel its depth o'erwhelm her eyes.
 With revel-shout, and triumph-song,
 Thus gaily march'd the giddy throng.

XVIII.

"Through many a gallery and hall
 They led, I ween, their royal thrall ;
 At length, beneath a fair arcade
 Their march and song at once they staid.
 The eldest maiden of the band,
 (The lovely maid was scarce eighteen,)
 Raised, with imposing air, her hand,
 And reverent silence did command,
 On entrance of their Queen,
 And they were mute.—But as a glance
 They steal on Arthur's countenance,
 Bewilder'd with surprise,
 Their smother'd mirth again 'gan speak,
 In archly dimpled chin and cheek,
 And laughter-lighted eyes.

XIX.

"The attributes of those high days
 Now only live in minstrel-lays ;
 For Nature, now exhausted, still
 Was then profuse of good and ill.
 Strength was gigantic, valour high,
 And wisdom soar'd beyond the sky,
 And beauty had such matchless beam
 As lights not now a lover's dream.
 Yet e'en in that romantic age,
 Ne'er were such charms by mortal seen,
 As Arthur's dazzled eyes engage,
 When forth on that enchanted stage,
 With glittering train of maid and page,
 Advanced the castle's Queen !
 While up the hall she slowly pass'd,
 Her dark eye on the King she cast,
 That flash'd expression strong ;
 The longer dwelt that lingering look,
 Her cheek the livelier colour took,
 And scarce the shame-faced King could brook
 The gaze that lasted long.
 A sage, who had that look espied,
 Where kindling passion strove with pride.
 Had whisper'd, ' Prince, beware !
 From the chafed tiger rend the prey.
 Rush on the lion when at bay,
 Bar the fell dragon's blighted way,
 But shun that lovely snare !'

XX.

"At once that inward strife suppress'd,
The dame approach'd her warlike guest,
With greeting in that fair degree,
Where female pride and courtesy
Are blended with such passing art
As awes at once and charms the heart.
A courtly welcome first she gave,
Then of his goodness 'gan to crave
Construction fair and true
Of her light maidens' idle mirth,
Who drew from lonely glens their birth,
Nor knew to pay to stranger worth
And dignity their due;
And then she pray'd that he would rest
That night her castle's honour'd guest.
The monarch meetly thanks express'd;
The banquet rose at her behest.
With lay and tale, and laugh and jest,
Apace the evening flew.

XXI.

"The Lady sate the Monarch by,
Now in her turn abash'd and shy,
And with indifference seem'd to hear
The toys he whispered in her ear.
Her bearing modest was and fair,
Yet shadows of constraint were there,
That show'd an over-cautious care
Some inward thought to hide;
Oft did she pause in full reply,
And oft cast down her large dark eye,
Oft check'd the soft voluptuous sigh,
That heaved her bosom's pride.
Slight symptoms these, but shepherds know
How hot the mid-day sun shall glow,
From the mist of morning sky;
And so the wily Monarch guess'd,
That this assumed restraint express'd
More ardent passions in the breast,
Than ventured to the eye.
Closer he press'd, while beakers rang,
While maidens laugh'd and minstrels sang,
Still closer to her ear—
But why pursue the common tale?
Or wherefore show how knights prevail
When ladies dare to hear?
Or wherefore trace from what slight cause
Its source one tyrant passion draws,
Till, mastering all within,
Where lives the man that has not tried,
How mirth can into folly glide,
And folly into sin!"

CANTO SECOND.

I.

Ulyph's Tale, continued.

"ANOTHER day, another day,
And yet another, glides away!
The Saxon stern, the pagan Dane,
Maraud on Britain's shores again.
Arthur, of Christendom the flower,
Lies loitering in a lady's bower;
The horn that foemen wont to fear,
Sounds but to wake the Cumbrian deer,
And Caliburn, the British pride,
Hangs useless by a lover's side.

II.

"Another day, another day,
And yet another, glides away!
Heroic plans in pleasure drown'd,
He thinks not of the Table Round
In lawless love dissolved his life,
He thinks not of his beauteous wife:
Better he loves to snatch a flower
From bosom of his paramour,
Than from a Saxon knight to wrest
The honours of his heathen crest!
Better to wreath, 'mid tresses brown,
The heron's plume her hawk struck down,
Than o'er the altar give to flow
The banners of a Paynim foe.
Thus, week by week, and day by day,
His life inglorious glides away:
But she, that soothes his dream, with fear
Beholds his hour of waking near!

III.

"Much force have mortal charms to stay
Our peace in Virtue's toilsome way;
But Guendolen's might far outshine
Each maid of merely mortal line.
Her mother was of human birth,
Her sire a Genie of the earth,
In days of old deem'd to preside
O'er lovers' wiles and beauty's pride,
By youths and virgins worshipp'd long,
With festive dance and choral song,

Till, when the cross to Britain came,
On heathen altars died the flame,
Now, deep in Wastdale solitude,
The downfall of his rights he rued,
And, born of his resentment heir,
He train'd to guile that lady fair,
To sink in slothful sin and shame
The champions of the Christian name.
Well skill'd to keep vain thoughts alive,
And all to promise, nought to give,—
The timid youth had hope in store,
The bold and pressing gain'd no more.
As wilder'd children leave their home,
After the rainbow's arch to roam,
Her lovers barter'd fair esteem,
Faith, fame, and honour, for a dream.

IV.

" Her sire's soft arts the soul to tame
She practised thus—till Arthur came;
Then, frail humanity had part,
And all the mother claim'd her heart.
Forgot each rule her father gave,
Sunk from a princess to a slave,
Too late must Guendolen deplore,
He, that has all, can hope no more!
Now must she see her lover strain,
At every turn her feeble chain;
Watch, to new-bind each knot, and shrink
To view each fast-decaying link.
Art she invokes to Nature's aid,
Her vest to zone, her locks to braid;
Each varied pleasure heard her call,
The feast, the tourney, and the ball:
Her storied lore she next applies,
Taxing her mind to aid her eyes;
Now more than mortal wise, and then
In female softness sunk again;
Now, raptured, with each wish complying,
With feign'd reluctance now denying;
Each charm she varied, to retain
A varying heart—and all in vain!

V.

" Thus in the garden's narrow bound,
Flank'd by some castle's Gothic round,
Fain would the artist's skill provide,
The limits of his realms to hide.
The walks in labyrinths he twines,
Shade after shade with skill combines,
With many a varied flowery knot,
And copse, and arbour, decks the spot,
Tempting the hasty foot to stay,
And linger on the lovely way—

Vain art ! vain hope ! 'tis fruitless all !
At length we reach the bounding wall,
And, sick of flower and trim-dress'd tree,
Long for rough glades and forest free.

VI.

" Three summer months had scantily flown,
When Arthur, in embarrass'd tone,
Spoke of his liegemen and his throne ;
Said, all too long had been his stay,
And duties, which a Monarch sway,
Duties, unknown to humbler men,
Must tear her knight from Guendolen.—
She listen'd silently the while,
Her mood express'd in bitter smile ;
Beneath her eye must Arthur quail,
And oft resume the unfinish'd tale,
Confessing, by his downcast eye,
The wrong he sought to justify.
He ceased. A moment mute she gazed,
And then her looks to heaven she raised,
One palm her temples veiled, to hide
The tear that sprung in spite of pride !
The other for an instant press'd
The foldings of her silken vest !

VII.

" At her reproachful sign and look,
The hint the Monarch's conscience took.
Eager he spoke—' No, lady, no !
Deem not of British Arthur so,
Nor think he can deserter prove,
To the dear pledge of mutual love.
I swear by sceptre and by sword,
As belted knight and Britain's lord,
That if a boy shall claim my care,
That boy is born a kingdom's heir ;
But, if a maiden Fate allows,
To choose that maid a fitting spouse,
A summer-day in lists shall strive
My knights,—the bravest knights alive,—
And he, the best and bravest tried,
Shall Arthur's daughter claim for bride.'—
He spoke, with voice resolved and high—
The lady deign'd him not reply.

VIII.

" At dawn of morn, ere on the brake
His matins did a warbler make,
Or stir'd his wing to brush away
A single dew-drop from the spray,
Ere yet a sunbeam, through the mist,
The castle battlements had kiss'd,

The gates revolve, the drawbridge falls,
And Arthur sallies from the walls.
Doff'd his soft garb of Persia's loom,
And steel from spur to helmet-plume,
His Lybian steed full proudly trode,
And joyful neigh'd beneath his load.
The Monarch gave a passing sigh
To penitence and pleasures by,
When, lo! to his astonished ken
Appear'd the form of Guendolen.

IX.

"Beyond the outmost wall she stood,
Attired like huntress of the wood:
Sandall'd her feet, her ankles bare,
And eagle-plumage deck'd her hair;
Firm was her look, her bearing bold,
And in her hand a cup of gold.
'Thou goest!' she said, 'and ne'er again
Must we two meet, in joy or pain.
Full fain would I this hour delay,
Though weak the wish—yet, wilt thou stay?
—No! thou look'st forward. Still attend,—
Part we like lover and like friend.'
She raised the cup—'Not this the juice,
The sluggish vines of earth produce;
Pledge we, at parting, in the draught
Which Genii love!'—she said, and quaff'd;
And strange unwonted lustres fly
From her flush'd cheek and sparkling eye.

X.

"The courteous Monarch bent him low,
And, stooping down from saddlebow,
Lifted the cup, in act to drink.
A drop escaped the goblet's brink—
Intense as liquid fire from hell,
Upon the charger's neck it fell.
Screaming with agony and fright,
He bolted twenty feet upright—
—The peasant still can show the dint,
Where his hoofs lighted on the flint.—
From Arthur's hand the goblet flew,
Scattering a shower of fiery dew,
That burn'd and blighted where it fell!³
The frantic steed rush'd up the dell,
As whistles from the bow the reed;
Nor bit nor rein could check his speed,
Until he gain'd the hill;
Then breath and sinew fail'd apace,
And, reeling from the desperate race,
He stood, exhausted, still.
The Monarch, breathless and amazed,
Back on the fatal castle gazed—

Nor tower nor donjon could he spy,
Darkening against the morning sky ;
But, on the spot where once they frown'd,
The lonely streamlet brawl'd around
A tufted knoll, where dimly shone
Fragments of rock and rifted stone.
Musing on this strange hap the while,
The King wends back to fair Carlisle ;
And cares, that cumber royal sway,
Wore memory of the past away.

XI.

" Full fifteen years, and more, were sped,
Each brought new wreaths to Arthur's head.
Twelve bloody fields, with glory fought,
The Saxons to subjection brought :
Rython, the mighty giant, slain
By his good brand, relieved Bretagne :
The Pictish Gillamore in fight,
And Roman Lucius, own'd his might ;
And wide were through the world renown'd
The glories of his Table Round.
Each knight who sought adventurous fame,
To the bold court of Britain came ;
And all who suffer'd causeless wrong,
From tyrant proud, or faitour strong,
Sought Arthur's presence to complain,
Nor there for aid implored in vain.

XII.

" For this the King, with pomp and pride,
Held solemn court at Whitsuntide,
And summon'd Prince and Peer,
All who owed homage for their land,
Or who craved knighthood from his hand,
Or who had succour to demand,
To come from far and near.
At such high tide, were glee and game
Mingled with feats of martial fame,
For many a stranger champion came,
In lists to break a spear ;
And not a knight of Arthur's host,
Save that he trode some foreign coast,
But at this feast of Pentecost
Before him must appear.
Ah, Minstrels ! when the Table Round
Arose, with all its warriors crown'd,
There was a theme for bards to sound
In triumph to their string !
Five hundred years are past and gone,
But Time shall draw his dying groan,
Ere he behold the British throne,
Begirt with such a ring !

XIII.

"The heralds named the appointed spot,
As Caerleon or Camelot,
Or Carlisle fair and free.
At Penrith, now, the feast was set,
And in fair Eamont's vale were met,
The flower of Chivalry.
There Galad sate with manly grace,
Yet maiden meekness in his face;
There Morolt of the iron mace,
And love-lorn Tristrem there:⁴
And Dinadam with lively glance,
And Lanval with the fairy lance,
And Mordred with his look askance,
Brunor and Bevidere.
Why should I tell of numbers more?
Sir Cay, Sir Banier, and Sir Bore,
Sir Carodac the keen,
The gentle Gawain's courteous lore,
Hector de Mares and Pellinore,
And Lancelot, that ever more
Look'd stol'n-wise on the Queen.

XIV.

"When wine and mirth did most abound,
And harpers play'd their blithest round,
A shrilly trumpet shook the ground,
And marshals clear'd the ring.
A maiden, on a palfrey white,
Heading a band of damsels bright,
Paced through the circle, to alight
And kneel before the King.
Arthur, with strong emotion, saw
Her graceful boldness check'd by awe,
Her dress, like huntress of the wold,
Her bow and baldric trapp'd with gold,
Her sandall'd feet, her ankles bare,
And the eagle-plume that deck'd her hair.
Graceful her veil she backward flung—
The King, as from his seat he sprung,
Almost cried, 'Guendolen!'
But 'twas a face more frank and wild,
Betwixt the woman and the child,
Where less of magic beauty smiled
Than of the race of men;
And in the forehead's haughty grace,
The lines of Britain's royal race,
Pendragon's you might ken.

XV.

"Faltering, yet gracefully, she said—
'Great Prince! behold an orphan maid,
In her departed mother's name,
A father's vow'd protection claim!

The vow was sworn in desert lone,
In the deep valley of St John.
At once the King the suppliant raised,
And kiss'd her brow, her beauty praised;
His vow, he said, should well be kept,
Ere in the sea the sun was dipp'd,—
Then, conscious, glanced upon his queen;
But she, unruffled at the scene
Of human frailty, construed mild,
Look'd upon Lancelot and smiled.

XVI.

“ ‘Up! up! each knight of gallant crest,
Take buckler, spear, and brand!
He that to-day shall bear him best,
Shall win my Gyneth's hand.
And Arthur's daughter, when a bride,
Shall bring a noble dower;
Both fair Strath-Clyde and Reged wide,
And Carlisle town and tower.’
Then might you hear each valiant knight,
To page and squire that cried,
‘Bring my armour bright, and my courser wight;
’Tis not each day that a warrior's might
May win a royal bride.’
Then cloaks and caps of maintenance
In haste aside they fling;
The helmets glance, and gleams the lance,
And the steel-weaved hauberks ring.
Small care had they of their peaceful array,
They might gather it that wolde;
For brake and bramble glitter'd gay,
With pearls and cloth of gold.

XVII.

“ Within trumpet sound of the Table Round,
Were fifty champions free,
And they all arise to fight that prize,—
They all arise but three.
Nor love's fond troth, nor wedlock's oath,
One gallant could withhold,
For priests will allow of a broken vow,
For penance or for gold.
But sigh and glance from ladies bright
Among the troop were thrown,
To plead their right, and true-love plight,
And 'plain of honour flown.
The knights they busied them so fast,
With buckling spur and belt,
That sigh and look, by ladies cast,
Were neither seen nor felt.
From pleading, or upbraiding glance,
Each gallant turns aside,

And only thought, 'If speeds my lance,
A queen becomes my bride!
She has fair Strath-Clyde, and Reged wide,
And Carlisle tower and town;
She is the loveliest maid, beside,
That ever heir'd a crown.'
So in haste their coursers they bestride,
And strike their visors down.

XVIII.

"The champions, arm'd in martial sort,
Have throng'd into the list,
And but three knights of Arthur's court
Are from the tourney miss'd.
And still these lovers' fame survives
For faith so constant shown,—
There were two who loved their neighbours' wives,
And one who loved his own.
The first was Lancelot de Lac,
The second Tristrem bold,
The third was valiant Carodac,
Who won the cup of gold,
What time, of all King Arthur's crew,
(Thereof came jeer and laugh,)
He, as the mate of lady true,
Alone the cup could quaff.
Though envy's tongue would fain surmise,
That but for very shame,
Sir Carodac, to fight that prize,
Had given both cup and dame;
Yet, since but one of that fair court,
Was true to wedlock's shrine,
Brand him who will with base report,—
He shall be free from mine.

XIX.

"Now caracoled the steeds in air,
Now plumes and pennons wanton'd fair,
As all around the lists so wide,
In panoply the champions ride.
King Arthur saw with startled eye,
The flower of chivalry march by,
The bulwark of the Christian creed,
The kingdom's shield in hour of need.
Too late he thought him of the woe,
Might from their civil conflict flow;
For well he knew they would not part
Till cold was many a gallant heart.
His hasty vow he 'gan to rue,
And Gyneth then apart he drew;
To her his leading-staff resign'd,
But added caution grave and kind.

XX.

" 'Thou see'st, my child, as promise-bound,
 I bid the trump for tourney sound.
 Take thou my warder as the queen
 And umpire of the martial scene;
 But mark thou this:—as Beauty bright
 Is polar star to valiant knight,
 As at her word his sword he draws,
 His fairest guerdon her applause,
 So gentle maid should never ask,
 Of knighthood vain and dangerous task;
 And Beauty's eyes should ever be,
 Like the twin stars that soothe the sea,
 And Beauty's breath shall whisper peace,
 And bid the storm of battle cease.
 I tell thee this, lest all too far,
 These knights urge tourney into war.
 Blithe at the trumpet let them go,
 And fairly counter blow for blow;—
 No striplings these, who succour need
 For a razed helm or falling steed.
 But, Gyneth, when the strife grows warm,
 And threatens death or deadly harm,
 Thy sire entreats, thy king commands,
 Thou drop the warder from thy hands.
 Trust thou thy father with thy fate,
 Doubt not he choose the fitting mate;
 Nor be it said, through Gyneth's pride,
 A rose of Arthur's chaplet died.'

XXI.

" A proud and discontented glow,
 O'ershadow'd Gyneth's brow of snow;
 She put the warder by:—
 ' Reserve thy boon, my liege,' she said,
 ' Thus chaffer'd down and limited,
 Debased and narrow'd for a maid
 Of less degree than I.
 No petty chief, but holds his heir
 At a more honour'd price and rare
 Than Britain's King holds me!
 Although the sunburn'd maid, for dower,
 Has but her father's rugged tower,
 His barren hill and lee.—
 King Arthur swore, "By crown and sword,
 As belted knight and Britain's lord,
 That a whole summer's day should strive
 His knights, the bravest knights alive!"
 Recall thine oath! and to her glen,
 Poor Gyneth can return agen;
 Not on thy daughter will the stain,
 That soils thy sword and crown remain.
 But think not she will ere be bride
 Save to the bravest, proved and tried;

Pendragon's daughter will not fear
 For clashing sword or splinter'd spear,
 Nor shrink though blood should flow;
 And all too well sad Gwendolen
 Hath taught the faithlessness of men,
 That child of hers should pity, when
 Their meed they undergo.'—

XXII.

“ He frown'd and sigh'd, the Monarch bold :—
 ‘ I give—what I may not withhold ;
 For, not for danger, dread, or death,
 Must British Arthur break his faith.
 Too late I mark, thy mother's art
 Hath taught thee this relentless part.
 I blame her not, for she had wrong,
 But not to these my faults belong.
 Use, then, the warder as thou wilt;
 But trust me, that, if life be spilt,
 In Arthur's love, in Arthur's grace,
 Gyneth shall lose a daughter's place.’
 With that he turn'd his head aside,
 Nor brook'd to gaze upon her pride,
 As, with the truncheon raised, she sate
 The arbitress of mortal fate;
 Nor brook'd to mark, in ranks disposed,
 How the bold champions stood opposed,
 For shrill the trumpet-flourish fell
 Upon his ear like passing bell !
 Then first from sight of martial fray
 Did Britain's hero turn away.

XXIII.

“ But Gyneth heard the clangour high,
 As hears the hawk the partridge cry.
 Oh, blame her not ! the blood was hers,
 That at the trumpet's summons stirs ! —
 And e'en the gentlest female eye
 Might the brave strife of chivalry
 A while untroubled view;
 So well accomplish'd was each knight,
 To strike and to defend in fight,
 Their meeting was a goodly sight,
 While plate and mail held true.
 The lists with painted plumes were strown,
 Upon the wind at random thrown,
 But helm and breastplate bloodless shone,
 It seem'd their feather'd crests alone
 Should this encounter rue.
 And ever, as the combat grows,
 The trumpet's cheery voice arose,
 Like lark's shrill song the flourish flows,
 Heard while the gale of April blows
 The merry greenwood through.

XXIV.

" But soon to earnest grew their game;
The spears drew blood, the swords struck flame,
And, horse and man, to ground there came
Knights, who shall rise no more!
Gone was the pride the war that graced,
Gay shields were cleft, and crests defaced,
And steel coats riven, and helms unbraced,
And pennons stream'd with gore.
Gone, too, were fence and fair array,
And desperate strength made deadly way
At random through the bloody fray,
And blows were dealt with headlong sway,
Unheeding where they fell;
And now the trumpet's clamours seem,
Like the shrill sea-bird's wailing scream,
Heard o'er the whirlpool's gulging stream,
The sinking seaman's knell!

XXV.

" Seem'd in this dismal hour, that Fate
Would Camlan's ruin antedate,
And spare dark Mordred's crime;
Already gasping on the ground
Lie twenty of the Table Round,
Of chivalry the prime.
Arthur, in anguish, tore away,
From head and beard his tresses grey,
And she, proud Gyneth, felt dismay,
And quaked with ruth and fear;
But still she deem'd her mother's shade
Hung o'er the tumult, and forbade
The sign that had the slaughter staid,
And chid the rising tear.
Then Brunor, Taulas, Mador, fell,
Helias the White, and Lionel,
And many a champion more;
Rochemont and Dinadam are down,
And Ferrand of the Forest Brown
Lies gasping in his gore.
Vanoc, by mighty Morolt press'd
Even to the confines of the list,
Young Vanoc of the beardless face,
(Fame spoke the youth of Merlin's race,)
O'erpower'd at Gyneth's footstool bled,
His heart's-blood dyed her sandals red.
But then the sky was overcast.
Then howl'd at once a whirlwind's blast,
And, rent by sudden throes,
Yawn'd in mid lists the quaking earth,
And from the gulf,—tremendous birth!—
The form of Merlin rose.

XXVI

"Sternly the Wizard Prophet eyed
The dreary lists with slaughter dyed,
And sternly raised his hand :—
'Madmen,' he said, 'your strife forbear ;
And thou, fair cause of mischief, hear
The doom thy fates demand !
Long shall close in stony sleep
Eyes for ruth that would not weep ;
Iron lethargy shall seal
Heart that pity scorn'd to feel.
Yet, because thy mother's art
Warp'd thine unsuspicious heart,
And for love of Arthur's race,
Punishment is blent with grace,
Thou shalt bear thy penance lone
In the Valley of Saint John,
And this weird shall overtake thee ;
Sleep, until a knight shall wake thee,
For feats of arms as far renown'd
As warrior of the Table Round.
Long endurance of thy slumber
Well may teach the world to number
All their woes from Gyneth's pride,
When the Red Cross champions died.

XXVII.

As Merlin speaks, on Gyneth's eye
Slumber's load begins to lie ;
Fear and anger vainly strive
Still to keep its light alive.
Twice, with effort and with pause,
O'er her brow her hand she draws ;
Twice her strength in vain she tries,
From the fatal chair to rise,
Merlin's magic doom is spoken,
Vanoc's death must now be wroken.
Slow the dark-fringed eyelids fall,
Curtaining each azure ball,
Slowly as on summer eves
Violets fold their dusky leaves.
The weighty baton of command
Now bears down her sinking hand,
On her shoulder droops her head ;
Net of pearl and golden thread,
Bursting, gave her locks to flow
O'er her arm and breast of snow.
And so lovely seem'd she there,
Spell-bound in her ivory chair,
That her angry sire, repenting,
Craved stern Merlin for relenting,
And the champions, for her sake,
Would again the contest wake ;

Till, in necromantic night,
Gyneth vanish'd from their sight.

XXVIII.

"Still she bears her weird alone,
In the Valley of Saint John;
And her semblance oft will seem,
Mingling in a champion's dream,
Of her weary lot to 'plain,
And crave his aid to burst her chain.
While her wondrous tale was new,
Warriors to her rescue drew,
East and west, and south and north,
From the Liffy, Thames, and Forth.
Most have sought in vain the glen,
Tower nor castle could they ken;
Not at every time or tide,
Nor by every eye, descried.
Fast and vigil must be borne,
Many a night in watching worn,
Ere an eye of mortal powers
Can discern those magic towers.
Of the persevering few,
Some from hopeless task withdrew,
When they read the dismal threat
Graved upon the gloomy gate.
Few have braved the yawning door,
And those few return'd no more.
In the lapse of time forgot,
Wellnigh lost is Gyneth's lot;
Sound her sleep as in the tomb,
Till waken'd by the trump of doom."

END OF LYULPH'S TALE.

Here pause my tale; for all too soon,
My Lucy, comes the hour of noon.
Already from thy lofty dome
Its courtly inmates 'gin to roam,
And each, to kill the goodly day
That God has granted them, his way
Of lazy sauntering has sought;
 Lordlings and wittings not a few,
Incapable of doing aught,
 Yet ill at ease with nought to do.
Here is no longer place for me;
For, Lucy, thou wouldst blush to see
 Some phantom, fashionably thin,
 With limb of lath and kerchief'd chin,
And lounging gape, or sneering grin,

Steal sudden on our privacy.
And how should I, so humbly born,
Endure the graceful spectre's scorn?
Faith ! ill, I fear, while conjuring wand
Of English oak is hard at hand.

II.

Or grant the hour be all too soon
For Hessian boot and pantaloons,
And grant the lounge seldom strays
Beyond the smooth and gravel'd maze,
Laud we the gods, that Fashion's train
Holds hearts of more adventurous strain.
Artists are hers, who scorn to trace
Their rules from Nature's boundless grace,
But their right paramount assert
To limit her by pedant art,
Damning whate'er of vast and fair
Exceeds a canvass three feet square.
This thicket, for their *gumption* fit,
May furnish such a happy *bit*.
Bards, too, are hers, wont to recite
Their own sweet lays by waxen light,
Half in the salver's tangle drown'd,
While the *chasse-café* glides around ;
And such may hither secret stray,
To labour an extempore :
Or sportsman, with his boisterous hollo,
May here his wiser spaniel follow,
Or stage-struck Juliet may presume
To choose this bower for tiring-room ;
And we alike must shun regard,
From painter, player, sportsman, bard.
Insects that skim in Fashion's sky,
Wasp, blue-bottle, or butterfly,
Lucy, have all alarms for us,
For all can hum and all can buzz.

III.

But oh, my Lucy say how long
We still must dread this trifling throng,
And stoop to hide, with coward art,
The genuine feelings of the heart !
No parents thine whose just command
Should rule their child's obedient hand ;
Thy guardians, with contending voice,
Press each his individual choice.
And which is Lucy's ?—Can it be
That puny fop, trimm'd cap-a-pee,
Who loves in the saloon to show
The arms that never knew a foe ;
Whose sabre trails along the ground,
Whose legs in shapeless boots are drown'd ;

A new Achilles, sure,—the steel
 Fled from his breast to fence his heel ;
 One, for the simple manly grace
 That wont to deck our martial race,
 Who comes in foreign trashery,
 Of tinkling chain and spur,
 A walking haberdashery,
 Of feathers, lace, and fur :
 In Rowley's antiquated phrase,
 Horse-milliner of modern days ?

IV.

Or is it he, the wordy youth,
 So early train'd for statesman's part,
 Who talks of honour, faith, and truth,
 As themes that he has got by heart ;
 Whose ethics Chesterfield can teach,
 Whose logic is from Single-speech ;
 Who scorns the meanest thought to vent,
 Save in the phrase of Parliament ;
 Who, in a tale of cat and mouse,
 Calls " order," and " divides the house,"
 Who craves " permission to reply,"
 Whose " noble friend is in his eye ;"
 Whose loving tender some have reckon'd
A motion, you should gladly second !

V.

What, neither ? Can there be a third,
 To such resistless swains preferr'd ?—
 O why, my Lucy, turn aside,
 With that quick glance of injured pride !
 Forgive me, love, I cannot bear
 That alter'd and resentful air.
 Were all the wealth of Russel mine,
 And all the rank of Howard's line,
 All would I give for leave to dry
 That dewdrop trembling in thine eye.
 Think not I fear such fops can wile
 From Lucy more than careless smile ;
 But yet if wealth and high degree
 Give gilded counters currency,
 Must I not fear, when rank and birth
 Stamp the pure ore of genuine worth ?
 Nobles there are, whose martial fires
 Rival the fame that raised their sires,
 And patriots, skill'd through storms of fate
 To guide and guard the reeling state.
 Such, such there are—If such should come,
 Arthur must tremble and be dumb,
 Self-exiled seek some distant shore,
 And mourn till life and grief are o'er.

VI.

What sight, what signal of alarm,
That Lucy clings to Arthur's arm?
Or is it, that the rugged way
Makes Beauty lean on lover's stay?
Oh, no! for on the vale and brake,
Nor sight nor sounds of danger wake,
And this trim sward of velvet green,
Were carpet for the Fairy Queen.
That pressure slight was but to tell,
That Lucy loves her Arthur well,
And fain would banish from his mind
Suspicious fear and doubt unkind.

VII.

But wouldst thou bid the demons fly
Like mist before the dawning sky,
There is but one resistless spell—
Say, wilt thou guess, or must I tell?
'Twere hard to name, in minstrel phrase,
A landaulet and four blood-bays,
But bards agree this wizard band
Can but be bound in Northern land.
'Tis there—nay, draw not back thy hand!—
'Tis there, this slender finger round
Must golden amulet be bound,
Which, bless'd with many a holy prayer,
Can change to rapture lovers' care,
And doubt and jealousy shall die,
And fears give place to ecstasy.

VIII.

Now, trust me, Lucy, all too long
Has been thy lover's tale and song.
O, why so silent, love, I pray?
Have I not spoke the livelong day?
And will not Lucy deign to say
One word her friend to bless?
I ask but one—a simple sound,
Within three little letters bound,
O, let the word be YES!

CANTO THIRD.

INTRODUCTION.

I.

LONG loved, long woo'd, and lately won,
My life's best hope, and now mine own!
Doth not this rude and Alpine glen
Recall our favourite haunts agen?
A wild resemblance we can trace,
Though reft of every softer grace,
As the rough warrior's brow may bear
A likeness to a sister fair.
Full well advised our Highland host,
That this wild pass on foot be cross'd,
While round Ben-Cruach's mighty base
Wheel the slow steeds and lingering chaise,
The keen old carle, with Scottish pride,
He praised his glen and mountains wide;
An eye he bears for nature's face,
Ay, and for woman's lovely grace.
Even in such mean degree we find
The subtle Scot's observing mind;
For, nor the chariot nor the train
Could gape of vulgar wonder gain,
But when old Allan would expound
Of Beal-na-paish the Celtic sound.
His bonnet doff'd, and bow, applied
His legend to my bonny bride;
While Lucy blush'd beneath his eye,
Courteous and cautious, shrewd and sly.

II.

Enough of him.—Now, ere we lose,
Plunged in the vale, the distant views,
Turn thee, my love! look back once more
To the blue lake's retiring shore.
On its smooth breast the shadows seem
Like objects in a morning dream,
What time the slumberer is aware
He sleeps, and all the vision's air:
Even so, on yonder liquid lawn,
In hues of bright reflection drawn,

Distinct the shaggy mountains lie,
Distinct the rocks, distinct the sky ;
The summer-clouds so plain we note,
That we might count each dappled spot :
We gaze and we admire, yet know
The scene is all delusive show.
Such dreams of bliss would Arthur draw,
When first his Lucy's form he saw ;
Yet sigh'd and sicken'd as he drew,
Despairing they could ere prove true !

III.

But, Lucy, turn thee now, to view
Up the fair glen, our destined way :
The fairy path that we pursue,
Distinguish'd but by greener hue,
Winds round the purple brae,
While Alpine flowers of varied dye
For carpet serve, or tapestry.
See how the little runnels leap,
In threads of silver, down the steep,
To swell the brooklet's moan !
Seems that the Highland Naiad grieves,
Fantastic while her crown she weaves,
Of rowan, birch, and alder leaves,
So lovely, and so lone.
There's no illusion there ; these flowers,
That wailing brook, these lovely bowers,
Are, Lucy, all our own ;
And, since thine Arthur called thee wife,
Such seems the prospect of his life,
A lovely path, on winding hill,
By gurgling brook and sloping hill.
'Tis true, that mortals cannot tell
What waits them in the distant dell ;
But be it hap, or be it harm,
We tread the pathway arm in arm.

IV.

And now, my Lucy, wot'st thou why
I could thy bidding twice deny,
When twice you pray'd I would again
Resume the legendary strain
Of the bold knight of Triermain ?
At length yon peevish vow you swore,
That you would sue to me no more,
Until the minstrel fit drew near,
And made me prize a listening ear.
But, loveliest, when thou first didst pray
Continuance of the knightly lay,
Was it not on the happy day
That made thy hand mine own ?

When, dizzied with mine ecstasy,
Nought past, or present, or to be,
Could I or think on, hear, or see,
Save, Lucy, thee alone !
A giddy draught my rapture was,
As ever chemist's magic gas.

V.

Again the summons I denied
In yon fair capital of Clyde :
My Harp—or let me rather choose
The good old classic form—my Muse,
(For Harp's an over-scuted phrase,
Worn out by bards of modern days,)
My Muse, then—seldom will she wake,
Save by dim wood and silent lake ;
She is the wild and rustic Maid,
Whose foot unsandall'd loves to tread
Where the soft greensward is inlaid
With varied moss and thyme ;
And, lest the simple lily-braid,
That coronets her temples, fade,
She hides her still in greenwood shade,
To meditate her rhyme.

VI.

And now she comes ! The murmur dear
Of the wild brook hath caught her ear,
The glade hath won her eye ;
She longs to join with each blithe rill
That dances down the Highland hill,
Her blither melody.
And now, my Lucy's way to cheer,
She bids Ben-Cruach's echoes hear
How closed the tale, my love whilere
Loved for its chivalry.
List how she tells, in notes of flame,
"Child Roland to the dark tower came !"

CANTO THIRD.

I.

BEWCASTLE now must keep the Hold,
Speir-Adam's steed must bide in stall,
Of Hartley-burn the bowmen bold
Must only shoot from battled wall;
And Liddesdale may buckle spur,
And Teviot now may belt the brand,
Taras and Ewes keep nightly stir,
And Eskdale foray Cumberland.
Of wasted fields and plunder'd flocks
The borderers bootless may complain;
They lack the sword of brave De Vaux,
There comes no aid from Triermain.
That lord, on high adventure bound,
Hath wander'd forth alone,
And day and night keeps watchful round
In the valley of Saint John.

II.

When first began his vigil bold,
The moon twelve summer nights was old,
And shone both fair and full;
High in the vault of cloudless blue,
O'er streamlet, dale, and rock, she threw
Her light composed and cool.
Stretch'd on the brown hill's heathy breast,
Sir Roland eyed the vale;
Chief where, distinguish'd from the rest,
Those clustering rocks uprear'd their crest,
The dwelling of the fair distress'd,
As told grey Lyulph's tale.
Thus as he lay, the lamp of night
Was quivering on his armour bright,
In beams that rose and fell,
And danced upon his buckler's boss,
That lay beside him on the moss,
As on a crystal well.

III.

Ever he watch'd, and oft he deem'd,
While on the mound the moonlight stream'd,
It alter'd to his eyes;
Fain would he hope the rocks 'gan change
To buttress'd walls their shapeless range,
Vain think, by transmutation strange,
He saw grey turrets rise.

But scarce his heart with hope throbb'd high,
Before the wild illusions fly,
Which fancy had conceived,
Abetted by an anxious eye
That long'd to be deceived.
It was a fond deception all,
Such as, in solitary hall,
Beguiles the musing eye,
When, gazing on the sinking fire,
Bulwark, and battlement, and spire,
In the red gulf we spy.
For, seen by moon of middle night,
Or by the blaze of noontide bright,
Or by the dawn of morning light,
Or evening's western flame,
In every tide, at every hour,
In mist, in sunshine, and in shower,
The rocks remain'd the same.

IV.

Oft has he traced the charmed mound,
Oft climb'd its crest, or paced it round,
Yet nothing might explore,
Save that the crags so rudely piled,
At distance seen, resemblance wild
To a rough fortress bore.
Yet still his watch the Warrior keeps,
Feeds hard and spare, and seldom sleeps,
And drinks but of the well ;
Ever by day he walks the hill,
And when the evening gale is chill,
He seeks a rocky cell,
Like hermit poor to bid his bead,
And tell his Ave and his Creed,
Invoking every saint at need,
For aid to burst his spell.

V.

And now the moon her orb has hid,
And dwindled to a silver thread,
Dim seen in middle heaven,
While o'er its curve careering fast,
Before the fury of the blast
The midnight clouds are driven.
The brooklet raved, for on the hills
The upland showers had swoln the rills,
And down the torrents came ;
Mutter'd the distant thunder dread,
And frequent o'er the vale was spread
A sheet of lightning flame.
De Vaux, within his mountain cave,
(No human step the storm durst brave,)

To moody meditation gave
Each faculty of soul,
Till, lull'd by distant torrent sound,
And the sad winds that whistled round,
Upon his thoughts, in musing drown'd,
A broken slumber stole.

VI.

'Twas then was heard a heavy sound,
(Sound, strange and fearful there to hear,
'Mongst desert hills, where, leagues around,
Dwelt but the gorcock and the deer :)
As, starting from his couch of fern,
Again he heard in clangor stern,
That deep and solemn swell, —
Twelve times, in measured tone, it spoke,
Like some proud minster's pealing clock,
Or city's 'larum-bell.
What thought was Roland's first when fell,
In that deep wilderness, the knell
Upon his startled ear?
To slander warrior were I loth,
Yet must I hold my minstrel troth, —
It was a thought of fear.

VII.

But lively was the mingled thrill
That chased that momentary chill,
For Love's keen wish was there,
And eager Hope and Valour high,
And the proud glow of Chivalry,
That burn'd to do and dare.
Forth from the cave the Warrior rush'd,
Long ere the mountain-voice was hush'd,
That answer'd to the knell ;
For long and far the unwonted sound,
Eddying in echoes round and round,
Was toss'd from fell to fell ;
And Glaramara answer flung,
And Grisdale-pike responsive rung,
And Legbert heights their echoes swung,
As far as Derwent's dell.

VIII.

Forth upon trackless darkness gazed
The Knight, bedeafen'd and amazed,
Till all was hush'd and still,
Save the swollen torrent's sullen roar,
And the night-blast that wildly bore
Its course along the hill.
Then on the northern sky there came
A light, as of reflected flame,
And over Legbert-head,

As if by magic art controll'd,
A mighty meteor slowly roll'd
 Its orb of fiery red ;
Thou wouldst have thought some demon dire
Came mounted on that car of fire,
 To do his errant dread.
Far on the sloping valley's course,
On thicket, rock, and torrent hoarse,
Shingle and Scrae, and Fell and Force,
 A dusky light arose :
Display'd, yet alter'd was the scene ;
Dark rock, and brook of silver sheen,
Even the gay thicket's summer green,
 In bloody tincture glows.

IX.

De Vaux had mark'd the sunbeams set,
At eve, upon the coronet
 Of that enchanted mound,
And seen but crags at random flung,
That, o'er the brawling torrent hung,
 In desolation frown'd.
What sees he by that meteor's lour ?—
A banner'd Castle, keep, and tower,
 Return the lurid gleam,
With battled walls and buttress fast,
And barbican and ballium vast,
And airy flanking towers, that cast
 Their shadows on the stream.
'Tis no deceit !—distinctly clear
Crenell and parapet appear,
While o'er the pile that meteor drear
 Makes momentary pause ;
Then forth its solemn path it drew,
And fainter yet and fainter grew
Those gloomy towers upon the view,
 As its wild light withdraws.

X.

Forth from the cave did Roland rush,
O'er crag and stream, through brier and bush,
 Yet far he had not sped,
Ere sunk was that portentous light
Behind the hills, and utter night
 Was on the valley spread.
He paused perforce, and blew his horn,
And, on the mountain-echoes borne,
 Was heard an answering sound,
A wild and lonely trumpet-note,—
In middle air it seem'd to float
 High o'er the battled mound ;

And sounds were heard, as when a guard
Of some proud castle, holding ward,
Pace forth their nightly round.
The valiant Knight of Triermain
Rung forth his challenge-blast again,
But answer came there none ;
And 'mid the mingled wind and rain,
Darkling he sought the vale in vain,
Until the dawning shone ;
And when it dawn'd, that wondrous sight,
Distinctly seen by meteor light,
It all had pass'd away !
And that enchanted mount once more
A pile of granite fragments bore,
As at the close of day.

XI.

Steel'd for the deed, De Vaux's heart
Scorn'd from his venturous quest to part.
He walks the vale once more ;
But only sees, by night or day,
That shatter'd pile of rocks so grey,
Hears but the torrent's roar.
Till when, through hills of azure borne,
The moon renew'd her silver horn,
Just at the time her waning ray
Had faded in the dawning day,
A summer mist arose ;
Adown the vale the vapours float,
And cloudy undulations moat
That tufted mound of mystic note,
As round its base they close.
And higher now the fleecy tide
Ascends its stern and shaggy side,
Until the airy billows hide
The rock's majestic isle ;
It seem'd a veil of filmy lawn,
By some fantastic fairy drawn
Around enchanted pile.

XII.

The breeze came softly down the brook,
And, sighing as it blew,
The veil of silver mist it shook,
And to De Vaux's eager look
Renew'd that wondrous view.
For, though the loitering vapour braved
The gentle breeze, yet oft it waved
Its mantle's dewy fold ;
And still, when shook that filmy screen,
Were towers and bastions dimly seen,
And Gothic battlements between
Their gloomy length unroll'd

Speed, speed, De Vaux, ere on thine eye
Once more the fleeting vision die!

—The gallant knight 'gan speed
As prompt and light as, when the hound
Is opening, and the horn is wound,
Careers the hunter's steed.

Down the steep dell his course amain
Hath rivall'd archer's shaft;

But ere the mound he could attain,
The rocks their shapeless form regain,
And, mocking loud his labour vain,

The mountain spirits laugh'd.
Far up the echoing dell was borne
Their wild unearthly shout of scorn.

XIII.

Wroth wax'd the Warrior.—“Am I then
Fool'd by the enemies of men,
Like a poor hind, whose homeward way
Is haunted by malicious fay?
Is Triermain become your taunt,
De Vaux your scorn? False fiends, avaunt!”
A weighty curtal-axe he bare;
The baleful blade so bright and square,
And the tough shaft of heben wood,
Were oft in Scottish gore imbrued.
Backward his stately form he drew,
And at the rocks the weapon threw,
Just where one crag's projected crest
Hung proudly balanced o'er the rest.
Hurl'd with main force, the weapon's shock
Rent a huge fragment of the rock.
If by mere strength, 'twere hard to tell,
Or if the blow dissolved some spell,
But down the headlong ruin came,
With cloud of dust and flash of flame.
Down bank, o'er bush, its course was borne,
Crush'd lay the copse, the earth was torn,
Till staid at length, the ruin dread
Cumber'd the torrent's rocky bed,
And bade the waters' high-swoln tide
Seek other passage for its pride.

XIV.

When ceased that thunder, Triermain
Survey'd the mound's rude front again;
And, lo! the ruin had laid bare,
Hewn in the stone, a winding stair,
Whose moss'd and fractured steps might lend
The means the summit to ascend;
And by whose aid the brave De Vaux
Began to scale these magic rocks,
And soon a platform won,

Where, the wild witchery to close,
Within three lances' length arose
The Castle of Saint John!
No misty phantom of the air,
No meteor-blazon'd show was there;
In morning splendour, full and fair,
The massive fortress shone.

XV.

Embattled high and proudly tower'd,
Shaded by ponderous flankers, lower'd
The portal's gloomy way.
Though for six hundred years and more,
Its strength had brook'd the tempest's roar,
The scutcheon'd emblems which it bore
Had suffer'd no decay:
But from the eastern battlement
A turret had made sheer descent,
And, down in recent ruin rent,
In the mid torrent lay.
Else, o'er the Castle's brow sublime,
Insults of violence or of time
Unfelt had pass'd away.
In shapeless characters of yore,
The gate this stern inscription bore:—

XVI.

Inscription.

"Patience waits the destined day,
Strength can clear the cumber'd way,
Warrior, who hast waited long,
Firm of soul, of sinew strong,
It is given thee to gaze
On the pile of ancient days.
Never mortal builder's hand
This enduring fabric plann'd;
Sign and sigil, word of power,
From the earth raised keep and tower.
View it o'er, and pace it round,
Rampart, turret, battled mound.
Dare no more! To cross the gate
Were to tamper with thy fate;
Strength and fortitude were vain,
View it o'er—and turn again."—

XVII.

"That would I," said the Warrior bold,
"If that my frame were bent and old,
And my thin blood dropp'd slow and cold
As icicle in thaw;

But while my heart can feel it dance,
Blithe as the sparkling wine of France,
And this good arm wields sword or lance,
I mock these words of awe!"
He said; the wicket felt the sway
Of his strong hand, and straight gave way,
And, with rude crash and jarring bray
The rusty bolts withdraw;
But o'er the threshold as he strode,
And forward took the vaulted road,
An unseen arm, with force amain,
The ponderous gate flung close again,
And rusted bolt and bar
Spontaneous took their place once more,
While the deep arch with sullen roar
Return'd their surly jar.
"Now closed is the gin and the prey within
By the Rood of Lanercost!
But he that would win the war-wolf's skin,
May rue him of his boast."
Thus muttering, on the Warrior went,
By dubious light down steep descent.

XVIII.

Unbarr'd, unlock'd, unwatch'd, a port
Led to the Castle's outer court:
There the main fortress, broad and tall,
Spread its long range of bower and hall,
And towers of varied size,
Wrought with each ornament extreme,
That Gothic art, in wildest dream
Of fancy, could devise;
But full between the Warrior's way
And the main portal arch, there lay
An inner moat;
Nor bridge nor boat
Affords De Vaux the means to cross
The clear, profound, and silent fosse.
His arms aside in haste he flings,
Cuirass of steel and hauberk rings,
And down falls helm, and down the shield,
Rough with the dints of many a field.
Fair was his manly form, and fair
His keen dark eye, and close curl'd hair,
When, all unarm'd, save that the brand
Of well-proved metal graced his hand,
With naught to fence his dauntless breast
But the close gipon's under-vest,
Whose sullied buff the sable stains
Of hauberk and of mail retains,—
Roland De Vaux upon the brim
Of the broad moat stood prompt to swim.

XIX.

Accoutred thus he dared the tide,
And soon he reach'd the farther side,
And enter'd soon the Hold,
And paced a hall, whose walls so wide
Were blazon'd all with feats of pride,
By warriors done of old.
In middle lists they counter'd here,
While trumpets seem'd to blow;
And there, in den or desert drear,
They quell'd gigantic foe,
Braved the fierce griffon in his ire,
Or faced the dragon's breath of fire.
Strange in their arms, and strange in face,
Heroes they seem'd of ancient race,
Whose deeds of arms, and race, and name,
Forgotten long by later fame,
Were here depicted, to appal
Those of an age degenerate,
Whose bold intrusion brave their fate
In this enchanted hall.
For some short space the venturous knight
With these high marvels fed his sight,
Then sought the chamber's upper end,
Where three broad easy steps ascend
To an arch'd portal door,
In whose broad folding leaves of state
Was framed a wicket window-grate,
And, ere he ventured more,
The gallant Knight took earnest view
The grated wicket-window through.

XX.

O, for his arms! Of martial weed
Had never mortal Knight such need!—
He spied a stately gallery; all
Of snow-white marble was the wall,
The vaulting, and the floor;
And, contrast strange! on either hand
There stood array'd in sable band
Four Maids whom Afric bore;
And each a Lybian tiger led,
Held by as bright and frail a thread
As Lucy's golden hair,—
For the leash that bound these monsters dread
Was but of gossamer.
Each Maiden's short barbaric vest
Left all unclosed the knee and breast,
And limbs of shapely jet;
White was their vest and turban's fold,
On arms and ankles rings of gold
In savage pomp were set;

A quiver on their shoulders lay,
And in their hand an assagay.
Such and so silent stood they there,
That Roland wellnigh hoped
He saw a band of statues rare,
Station'd the gazer's soul to scare ;
But when the wicket oped,
Each grisly beast 'gan upward draw,
Roll'd his grim eye, and spread his claw,
Scented the air, and lick'd his jaw ;
While these weird Maids, in Moorish tongue,
A wild and dismal warning sung.

XXI.

"Rash Adventurer, bear thee back !
Dread the spell of Dahomay !
Fear the race of Zaharak,
Daughters of the burning day !

"When the whirlwind's gusts are wheeling,
Ours it is the dance to braid ;
Zarah's sands in pillars reeling,
Join the measure that we tread,
When the Moon has donn'd her cloak,
And the stars are red to see,
Shrill when pipes the sad Siroc,
Music meet for such as we.

"Where the shatter'd columns lie,
Showing Carthage once had been,
If the wandering Santon's eye
Our mysterious rites hath seen,—
Oft he cons the prayer of death,
To the nations preaches doom,
'Azrael's brand hath left the sheath !
Moslems, think upon the tomb !'

"Ours the scorpion, ours the snake,
Ours the hydra of the fen,
Ours the tiger of the brake,
All that plague the sons of men.
Ours the tempest's midnight wrack,
Pestilence that wastes by day—
Dread the race of Zaharak !
Fear the spell of Dahomay !"

XXII.

Uncouth and strange the accents shrill
Rung those vaulted roofs among,
Long it was ere, faint and still,
Died the far resounding song.

While yet the distant echoes roll,
The Warrior communed with his soul.
"When first I took this venturous quest,
I swore upon the rood,
Neither to stop, nor turn, nor rest,
For evil or for good.
My forward path too well I ween,
Lies yonder fearful ranks between!
For man unarm'd, 'tis bootless hope
With tigers and with fiends to cope—
Yet, if I turn, what waits me there,
Save famine dire and fell despair?—
Other conclusion let me try,
Since, choose howe'er I list, I die.
Forward, lies faith and knightly fame;
Behind, are perjury and shame.
In life or death I hold my word!"
With that he drew his trusty sword,
Caught down a banner from the wall,
And enter'd thus the fearful hall.

XXIII.

On high each wayward Maiden threw
Her swarthy arm, with wild halloo!
On either side a tiger sprung—
Against the leftward foe he flung
The ready banner, to engage
With tangling folds the brutal rage;
The right-hand monster in mid air
He struck so fiercely and so fair,
Through gullet and through spinal bone,
The trenchant blade had sheerly gone.
His grisly brethren ramp'd and yell'd,
But the slight leash their rage withheld,
Whilst, 'twixt their ranks, the dangerous road
Firmly, though swift, the champion strode.
Safe to the gallery's bound he drew,
Safe pass'd an open portal through;
And when against pursuit he flung
The gate, judge if the echoes rung!
Onward his daring course he bore,
While, mix'd with dying growl and roar,
Wild jubilee and loud hurra
Pursued him on his venturous way.

XXIV.

"Hurra, hurra! Our watch is done!
We hail once more the tropic sun.
Pallid beams of northern day,
Farewell, farewell! Hurra, hurra!"

" Five hundred years o'er this cold glen
Hath the pale sun come round ager ;
Foot of man, till now, hath ne'er
Dared to cross the Hall of Fear.

" Warrior ! thou, whose dauntless heart
Gives us from our ward to part,
Be as strong in future trial,
Where resistance is denial.

" Now for Afric's glowing sky,
Zwenga wide and Atlas high,
Zaharak and Dahomay !——
Mount the winds ! Hurra, hurra !"

XXV.

The wizard song at distance died,
As if in ether borne astray,
While through waste halls and chambers wide
The Knight pursued his steady way,
Till to a lofty dome he came,
That flash'd with such a brilliant flame,
As if the wealth of all the world
Were there in rich confusion hurl'd.
For here the gold, in sandy heaps,
With duller earth, incorporate, sleeps ;
Was there in ingots piled, and there
Coin'd badge of empery it bare ;
Yonder, huge bars of silver lay,
Dimm'd by the diamond's neighbouring ray,
Like the pale moon in morning day ;
And in the midst four Maidens stand,
The daughters of some distant land.
Their hue was of the dark-red dye,
That fringes oft a thunder sky ;
Their hands palmetto baskets bare,
And cotton fillets bound their hair ;
Slim was their form, their mien was shy,
To earth they bent the humbled eye,
Folded their arms, and suppliant kneel'd,
And thus their proffer'd gifts revealed.

XXVI.

CHORUS.

" See the treasures Merlin piled,
Portion meet for Arthur's child.
Bathe in Wealth's unbounded stream,
Wealth that Avarice ne'er could dream !"

FIRST MAIDEN.

" See these clots of virgin gold !
Sever'd from the sparry mould,

Nature's mystic alchemy
In the mine thus bade them lie;
And their orient smile can win
Kings to stoop, and saints to sin."—

SECOND MAIDEN.

"See these pearls, that long have slept;
These were tears by Naiads wept
For the loss of Marinel.
Tritons in the silver shell
Treasured them, till hard and white
As the teeth of Amphitrite."—

THIRD MAIDEN.

"Does a livelier hue delight?
Here are rubies blazing bright,
Here the emerald's fairy green,
And the topaz glows between;
Here their varied hues unite,
In the changeful chrysolite."—

FOURTH MAIDEN.

"Leave these gems of poorer shine,
Leave them all, and look on mine!
While their glories I expand,
Shade thine eyebrows with thy hand.
Mid-day sun and diamond's blaze
Blind the rash beholder's gaze."—

CHORUS.

"Warrior, seize the splendid store;
Would 'twere all our mountains bore!
We should ne'er in future story,
Read, Peru, thy perish'd glory!"

XXVII.

Calmly and unconcern'd, the Knight
Waved aside the treasures bright:—
"Gentle Maidens, rise, I pray!
Bar not thus my destined way.
Let these boasted brilliant toys
Braid the hair of girls and boys!
Bid your streams of gold expand
O'er proud London's thirsty land.
De Vaux of wealth saw never need,
Save to purvey him arms and steed,
And all the ore he deign'd to hoard
Inlays his helm, and hilts his sword."
Thus gently parting from their hold,
He left, unmoved, the dome of gold.

XXVIII.

And now the morning sun was high,
De Vaux was weary, faint, and dry;
When, lo! a plashing sound he hears,
A gladsome signal that he hears
 Some frolic water-run;
And soon he reach'd a court-yard square.
Where, dancing in the sultry air,
Toss'd high aloft, a fountain fair
 Was sparkling in the sun.
On right and left, a fair arcade,
In long perspective view display'd
Alleys and bowers, for sun or shade:
 But, full in front, a door,
Low-brow'd and dark, seem'd as it led
To the lone dwelling of the dead,
 Whose memory was no more.

XXIX.

Here stopp'd De Vaux an instant's space,
To bathe his parched lips and face,
 And mark'd with well-pleased eye,
Refracted on the fountain stream,
In rainbow hues the dazzling beam
 Of that gay summer sky.
His senses felt a mild control,
Like that which lulls the weary soul,
 From contemplation high
Relaxing, when the ear receives
The music that the greenwood leaves
 Make to the breezes' sigh.

XXX.

And oft in such a dreamy mood,
 The half-shut eye can frame
Fair apparitions in the wood
As if the nymphs of field and flood
 In gay procession came.
Are these of such fantastic mould,
 Seen distant down the fair arcade,
These Maids enlink'd in sister-fold,
 Who, late at bashful distance staid,
Now tripping from the greenwood shade
Nearer the musing champion draw,
And, in a pause of seeming awe,
 Again stand doubtful now?—
Ah, that sly pause of witching powers!
That seems to say, "To please be ours,
 Be yours to tell us how."
Their hue was of the golden glow
That suns of Candahar bestow,

O'er which in slight suffusion flows
A frequent tinge of paly rose;
Their limbs were fashion'd fair and free,
In nature's justest symmetry;
And, wreathed with flowers, with odours graced,
Their raven ringlets reach'd the waist:
In eastern pomp, its gilding pale
The hennah lent each shapely nail,
And the dark sumah gave the eye
More liquid and more lustrous dye.
The spotless veil of misty lawn,
In studied disarrangement, drawn
The form and bosom o'er,
To win the eye, or tempt the touch,
For modesty show'd all too much—
Too much—yet promised more.

XXXI.

"Gentle Knight, a while delay,"
Thus they sung, "thy toilsome way,
While we pay the duty due
To our Master and to you.
Over Avarice, over Fear,
Love triumphant led thee here;
Warrior, list to us, for we
Are slaves to Love, are friends to thee.
Though no treasured gems have we,
To proffer on the bended knee,
Though we boast nor arm nor heart,
For the assagay or dart,
Swains allow each simple girl
Ruby lip and teeth of pearl;
Or, if dangers more you prize,
Flatterers find them in our eyes.

"Stay, then, gentle Warrior, stay,
Rest till evening steal on day;
Stay, O, stay!—in yonder bowers
We will braid thy locks with flowers,
Spread the feast and fill the wine,
Charm thy ear with sounds divine,
Weave our dances till delight
Yield to languor, day to night.

"Then shall she you most approve
Singing the lays that best you love,
Soft thy mossy couch shall spread,
Watch thy pillow, prop thy head,
Till the weary night be o'er—
Gentle Warrior, wouldst thou more?
Wouldst thou more, fair Warrior,—she
Is slave to Love and slave to thee."

XXXII.

O, do not hold it for a crime
 In the bold hero of my rhyme,
 For Stoic look,
 And meet rebuke,
 He lack'd the heart or time ;
 As round the band of sirens trip,
 He kiss'd one damsel's laughing lip,
 And press'd another's proffer'd hand.
 Spoke to them all in accents bland,
 But broke their magic circle through ;
 "Kind Maids," he said, "adieu, adieu !
 My fate, my fortune, forward lies."
 He said, and vanish'd from their eyes ;
 But, as he dared that darksome way,
 Still heard behind their lovely lay : —
 "Fair Flower of Courtesy, depart !
 Go, where the feelings of the heart
 With the warm pulse in concord move ;
 Go, where Virtue sanctions Love !"

XXXIII.

Downward De Vaux through darksome ways
 And ruin'd vaults has gone.
 Till issue from their wilder'd maze,
 Or safe retreat, seem'd none, —
 And e'en the dismal path he strays
 Grew worse as he went on.
 For cheerful sun, for living air,
 Foul vapours rise and mine-fires glare,
 Whose fearful light the dangers show'd
 That dogg'd him on that dreadful road.
 Deep pits, and lakes of waters dun,
 They show'd, but show'd not how to shun.
 These scenes of desolate despair,
 These smothering clouds of poison'd air,
 How gladly had De Vaux exchanged,
 Though 'twere to face yon tigers ranged !
 Nay, soothful bards have said
 So perilous his state seem'd now,
 He wish'd him under arbour bough
 With Asia's willing maid.
 When, joyful sound ! at distance near
 A trumpet flourish'd loud and clear,
 And as it ceased, a lofty lay
 Seem'd thus to chide his lagging way.

XXXIV.

"Son of Honour, theme of story,
 Think on the reward before ye !
 Danger, darkness, toil despise ;
 'Tis Ambition bids thee rise.

"He that would her heights ascend,
Many a weary step must wend ;
Hand and foot and knee he tries ;
Thus Ambition's minions rise.

"Lag not now, though rough the way,
Fortune's mood brooks no delay ;
Grasp the boon that's spread before ye,
Monarch's power, and Conqueror's glory !"

It ceased. Advancing on the sound,
A steep ascent the Wanderer found,
And then a turret stair :
Nor climb'd he far its steepy round
Till fresher blew the air,
And next a welcome glimpse was given,
That cheer'd him with the light of heaven.
At length his toil had won
A lofty hall with trophies dress'd,
Where as to greet imperial guest,
Four Maidens stood, whose crimson vest
Was bound with golden zone.

XXXV.

Of Europe seem'd the damsels all ;
The first a nymph of lively Gaul,
Whose easy step and laughing eye
Her borrow'd air of awe belie ;
The next a maid of Spain,
Dark-eyed, dark-hair'd, sedate, yet bold ;
White ivory skin and tress of gold,
Her shy and bashful comrade told
For daughter of Almaine.
These maidens bore a royal robe,
With crown, with sceptre, and with globe,
Emblems of empery ;
The fourth a space behind them stood,
And leant upon a harp, in mood
Of minstrel ecstasy.
Of merry England she, in dress
Like ancient British Druidess.
Her hair an azure fillet bound,
Her graceful vesture swept the ground,
And in her hand display'd,
A crown did that fourth Maiden hold,
But unadorn'd with gems and gold,
Of glossy laurel made.

XXXVI.

At once to brave De Vaux knelt down
These foremost Maidens three,

And proffer'd sceptre, robe, and crown,
 Liegdom and seignorie,
 O'er many a region wide and fair,
 Destined, they said, for Arthur's heir;
 But homage would he none:—
 "Rather," he said, "De Vaux would ride,
 A Warden of the Border-side,
 In plate and mail, than, robed in pride,
 A monarch's empire own;
 Rather, far rather, would he be
 A free-born knight of England free,
 Than sit on Despot's throne."
 So pass'd he on, when that fourth Maid,
 As starting from a trance,
 Upon the harp her finger laid;
 Her magic touch the chords obey'd,
 Their soul awak'd at once!

SONG OF THE FOURTH MAIDEN.

"Quake to your foundations deep,
 Stately Towers, and Banner'd Keep,
 Bid your vaulted echoes moan,
 As the dreaded step they own.

"Fiends, that wait on Merlin's spell,
 Hear the foot-fall! mark it well!
 Spread your dusky wings abroad,
 Bounce ye for your homeward road!

It is HIS, the first who e'er
 Dared the dismal Hall of Fear;
 HIS, who hath the snares defied
 Spread by Pleasure, Wealth, and Pride.

Quake to your foundations deep,
 Bastion huge, and Turret steep!
 Tremble, Keep! and totter, Tower!
 This is Gyneth's waking hour."

XXXVII.

Thus while she sung, the venturous Knight
 Has reach'd a bower, where milder light
 Through crimson curtains fell;
 Such soften'd shade the hill receives,
 Her purple veil when twilight leaves
 Upon its western swell.
 That bower, the gazer to bewitch,
 Hath wondrous store of rare and rich
 As e'er was seen with eye;
 For there by magic skill, I wis,
 Form of each thing that living is
 Was limn'd in proper dye.

All seem'd to sleep—the timid hare
On form, the stag upon his lair,
The eagle in her eyrie fair
Between the earth and sky.
But what of pictured rich and rare
Could win De Vaux's eye-glance, where,
Deep slumbering in the fatal chair,
He saw King Arthur's child!
Doubt, and anger, and dismay,
From her brow had pass'd away,
Forgot was that fell tourney-day,
For, as she slept, she smiled:
It seem'd, that the repentant Seer
Her sleep of many a hundred year
With gentle dreams beguiled.

XXXVIII.

That form of maiden loveliness,
'Twixt childhood and 'twixt youth,
That ivory chair, that sylvan dress,
The arms and ankles bare, express
Of Lyulph's tale the truth.
Still upon her garment's hem
Vanoc's blood made purple gem,
And the warder of command
Cumber'd still her sleeping hand;
Still her dark locks dishevell'd flow
From net of pearl o'er breast of snow
And so fair the slumberer seems,
That De Vaux impeach'd his dreams,
Vapid all and void of might,
Hiding half her charms from sight.
Motionless a while he stands,
Folds his arms and clasps his hands,
Trembling in his fitful joy
Doubtful how he should destroy
Long-enduring spell;
Doubtful, too, when slowly rise
Dark-fringed lids of Gyneth's eyes,
What these eyes shall tell.—
“St George! St Mary! can it be,
That they will kindly look on me!

XXXIX.

Gently, lo! the Warrior kneels,
Soft that lovely hand he steals,
Soft to kiss, and soft to clasp—
But the warder leaves his grasp;
Lightning flashes, rolls the thunder
Gyneth startles from her sleep,
Totters Tower, and trembles Keep,
Burst the Castle-walls asunder!

Fierce and frequent were the shocks,—
 Melt the magic halls away ;
 ———But beneath their mystic rocks,
 In the arms of bold De Vaux,
 Safe the princess lay;
 Safe and free from magic power,
 Blushing like the rose's flower
 Opening to the day ;
 And round the Champion's brows were bound
 The crown that Druidess had wound,
 Of the green laurel-bay.
 And this was what remain'd of all
 The wealth of each enchanted hall,
 The Garland and the Dame :
 But where should Warrior seek the meed,
 Due to high worth for daring deed,
 Except from LOVE and FAME !

CONCLUSION.

I.

MY LUCY, when the Maid is won,
 The Minstrel's task, thou know'st, is done ;
 And to require of bard
 That to his dregs the tale should run,
 Were ordinance too hard.
 Our lovers, briefly be it said,
 Wedded as lovers wont to wed,
 When tale or play is o'er ;
 Lived long and blest, loved fond and true,
 And saw a numerous race renew
 The honours that they bore.
 Know, too, that when a pilgrim strays,
 In morning mist or evening maze,
 Along the mountain lone,
 That fairy fortress often mocks
 His gaze upon the castled rocks
 Of the Valley of Saint John ;
 But never man since brave De Vaux
 The charmed portal won.

'Tis now a vain illusive show,
That melts whene'er the sunbeams glow
Or the fresh breeze hath blown.

II.

But see, my love, where far below
Our lingering wheels are moving slow,
The whiles, up-gazing still,
Our menials eye our steepy way,
Marvelling, perchance, what whim can stay
Our steps, when eve is sinking grey,
On this gigantic hill.
So think the vulgar—Life and time
Ring all their joys in one dull chime
Of luxury and ease;
And, O! beside these simple knaves,
How many better born are slaves
To such coarse joys as these,—
Dead to the nobler sense that glows
When nature's grander scenes unclose!
But, Lucy, we will love them yet,
The mountain's misty coronet,
The greenwood, and the wold;
And love the more, that of their maze
Adventure high of other days
By ancient bards is told,
Bringing, perchance, like my poor tale.
Some moral truth in fiction's veil:
Nor love them less, that o'er the hill
The evening breeze, as now, comes chill:—
My love shall wrap her warm,
And, fearless of the slippery way,
While safe she trips the heathy brae,
Shall hang on Arthur's arm.

THE END OF TRIERMAIN.

SELECTIONS.

FROM THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.

PALE Brussels! then what thoughts were thine,
When ceaseless from the distant line

Continued thunders came!
Each burgher held his breath, to hear
These forerunners of havoc near,
Of rapine and of flame.

What ghastly sights were thine to meet,
When, rolling through thy stately street,
The wounded show'd their mangled plight
In token of the unfinish'd fight,
And from each anguish-laden wain
The blood-drops laid thy dust like rain!
How often in the distant drum
Heard'st thou the fell Invader come,
While Ruin, shouting to his band,
Shook high her torch and gory brand!—
Cheer thee, fair City! From yon stand,
Impatient, still his outstretch'd hand

Points to his prey in vain,
While maddening in his eager mood,
And all unwont to be withstood,
He fires the fight again.

“On! On!” was still his stern exclaim;

“Confront the battery's jaws of flame!

Rush on the levell'd gun!

My steel-clad cuirassiers, advance!

Each Hulan forward with his lance,

My Guard—my Chosen—charge for France—

France and Napoleon!”

Loud answer'd their acclaiming shout,

Greeting the mandate which sent out

Their bravest and their best to dare

The fate their leader shunn'd to share.

But HE, his country's sword and shield,

Still in the battle-front reveal'd,

Where danger fiercest swept the field,

Came like a beam of light,

In action prompt, in sentence brief—

“Soldiers, stand firm,” exclaim'd the Chief,

“England shall tell the fight!”

On came the whirlwind—like the last
 But fiercest sweep of tempest-blast—
 On came the whirlwind—steel-gleams broke
 Like lightning through the rolling smoke ;
 The war was waked anew,
 Three hundred cannon-mouths roar'd loud,
 And from their throats, with flash and cloud,
 Their showers of iron threw.
 Beneath their fire, in full career,
 Rush'd on the ponderous cuirassier,
 The lancer couch'd his ruthless spear,
 And hurrying as to havoc near,
 The cohorts' eagles flew.
 In one dark torrent, broad and strong,
 The advancing onset roll'd along,
 Forth harbinger'd by fierce acclaim,
 That, from the shroud of smoke and flame,
 Peal'd wildly the imperial name.

Look forth, once more, with soften'd heart,
 Ere from the field of fame we part ;
 Triumph and Sorrow border near.
 And joy oft melts into a tear.
 Alas ! what links of love that morn
 Has War's rude hand asunder torn !
 For ne'er was field so sternly fought,
 And ne'er was conquest dearer bought.

FROM HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS.

List to the valorous deeds that were done
 By Harold the Dauntless, Count Witikind's son !

Count Witikind came of a regal strain,
 And roved with his Norsemen the land and the main
 Woe to the realms which he coasted ! for there
 Was shedding of blood, and rending of hair,
 Rape of maiden, and slaughter of priest,
 Gathering of ravens and wolves to the feast :
 When he hoisted his standard black,
 Before him was battle, behind him wrack,
 And he burn'd the churches, that heathen Dane,
 To light his band to their barks again.

On Erin's shores was his outrage known,
 The winds of France had his banners blown ;
 Little was there to plunder, yet still
 His pirates had foray'd on Scottish hill :
 But upon merry England's coast
 More frequent he sail'd, for he won the most.

So wide and so far his ravage they knew,
 If a sail but gleam'd white 'gainst the welkin blue,
 Trumpet and bugle to arms did call,
 Burghers hasten'd to man the wall,
 Peasants fled inland his fury to 'scape,
 Beacons were lighted on headland and cape,
 Bells were toll'd out, and aye as they rung
 Fearful and faintly the grey brothers sung,
 "Bless us, St. Mary, from flood and from fire,
 From famine and pest, and Count Witikind's ire!"

He liked the wealth of fair England so well,
 That he sought in her bosom as native to dwell.
 He enter'd the Humber in fearful hour,
 And disembark'd with his Danish power.
 Three Earls came against him with all their train,—
 Two hath he taken, and one hath he slain.
 Count Witikind left the Humber's rich strand,
 And he wasted and warr'd in Northumberland.
 But the Saxon King was a sire in age,
 Weak in battle, in council sage;
 Peace of that heathen leader he sought,
 Gifts he gave, and quiet he bought;
 And the Count took upon him the peaceable style
 Of a vassal and liegeman of Britain's broad isle.

Time will rust the sharpest sword,
 Time will consume the strongest cord;
 That which moulders hemp and steel,
 Mortal arm and nerve must feel.
 Of the Danish band, whom Count Witikind led,
 Many wax'd aged, and many were dead:
 Himself found his armour full weighty to bear,
 Wrinkled his brows grew, and hoary his hair;
 He lean'd on a staff, when his step went abroad,
 And patient his palfrey, when steed he bestrode.
 As he grew feebler, his wildness ceased,
 He made himself peace with prelate and priest.—
 Made his peace, and, stooping his head,
 Patiently listed the counsel they said:
 Saint Cuthbert's Bishop was holy and grave,
 Wise and good was the counsel he gave.

"Thou hast murder'd, robb'd, and spoil'd,
 Time it is thy poor soul were assail'd;
 Priests didst thou slay, and churches burn,
 Time it is now to repentance to turn;
 Fiends hast thou worshipp'd, with fiendish rite,
 Leave now the darkness, and wend into light:
 O! while life and space are given,
 Turn thee yet, and think of Heaven!"

Song.

"She may be fair," he sang, "but yet
 Far fairer have I seen
 Than she, for all her locks of jet,
 And eyes so dark and sheen.
 Were I a Danish knight in arms,
 As one day I may be,
 My heart should own no foreign charms,—
 A Danish maid for me.

"I love my fathers' northern land,
 Where the dark pine-trees grow,
 And the bold Baltic's echoing strand
 Looks o'er each grassy oe.
 I love to mark the lingering sun,
 From Denmark loth to go,
 And leaving on the billows bright,
 To cheer the short-lived summer night,
 A path of ruddy glow.

BALLADS

AND

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

THE EVE OF ST. JOHN.

SMAYLHO'ME, or Smallholm Tower, the scene of the following ballad, is situated on the northern boundary of Roxburghshire, among a cluster of wild rocks, called Sandiknow Crags, the property of Hugh Scott, Esq. of Harden [now Lord Polwarth]. The tower is a high square building, surrounded by an outer wall, now ruinous. The circuit of the outer court, being defended on three sides by a precipice and morass, is accessible only from the west, by a steep and rocky path. The apartments, as is usual in a Border keep or fortress, are placed one above another, and communicate by a narrow stair: on the roof are two bartizans, or platforms, for defence or pleasure. The inner door of the tower is wood, the outer an iron gate; the distance between them being nine feet, the thickness, namely, of the wall. From the elevated situation of Smaylho'me Tower, it is seen many miles in every direction. Among the crags by which it is surrounded, one, more eminent, is called the *Watchfold*, and is said to have been the station of a beacon in the times of war with England. Without the tower-court is a ruined chapel. Brotherstone is a heath, in the neighbourhood of Smaylho'me Tower.

THE Baron of Smaylho'me rose with day,
 He spurr'd his courser on,
 Without stop or stay, down the rocky way,
 That leads to Brotherstone.

He went not with the bold Buccleuch,
 His banner broad to rear;
 He went not 'gainst the English yew
 To lift the Scottish spear.

Yet his plate-jack^a was braced, and his helmet was laced,
 And his vaunt-brace of proof he wore;
 At his saddle-gerthe was a good steel sperthe,
 Full ten pound weight and more.

The Baron return'd in three days' space,
 And his looks were sad and sour;
 And weary was his courser's pace,
 As he reach'd his rocky tower.

He came not from where Ancram Moor¹
 Ran red with English blood;
 Where the Douglas true, and the bold Buccleuch,
 'Gainst keen Lord Evers stood.

Yet was his helmet hack'd and hew'd,
 His acton pierced and tore,
 His axe and his dagger with blood imbrued,—
 But it was not English gore.

He lighted at the Chapellage,
 He held him close and still;
 And he whistled thrice for his little foot page,
 His name was English Will.

"Come thou hither, my little foot-page,
 Come hither to my knee;
 Though thou art young, and tender of age,
 I think thou art true to me.

"Come, tell me all that thou hast seen,
 And look thou tell me true!
 Since I from Smaylho'me tower have been,
 What did thy lady do?"—

"My lady, each night, sought the lonely light,
 That burns on the wild Watchfold;
 For, from height to height, the beacons bright
 Of the English foemen told.

"The bitter clamour'd from the moss,
 The wind blew loud and shrill;
 Yet the craggy pathway she did cross
 To the eiry Beacon Hill.

^a The plate-jack is coat-armour; the vaunt-brace, or wam-brace, armour for the body; the sperthe, a battle-axe.

¹ See Note 1 of the "NOTES TO THE EVE OF ST JOHN" in the Appendix. The figures of reference throughout the poem relate to further Notes in the Appendix.

"I watch'd her steps, and silent came
Where she sat her on a stone;—
No watchman stood by the dreary flame,
It burned all alone.

"The second night I kept her in sight,
Till to the fire she came,
And, by Mary's might! an Armed Knight
Stood by the lonely flame.

"And many a word that warlike lord
Did speak to my lady there;
But the rain fell fast, and loud blew the blast,
And I heard not what they were.

The third night there the sky was fair,
And the mountain-blast was still,
As again I watch'd the secret pair,
On the lonesome Beacon Hill,

"And I heard her name the midnight hour,
And name this holy eve;
And say, 'Come this night to thy lady's bower;
Ask no bold Baron's leave.

"He lifts his spear with the bold Buccleuch;
His lady is all alone;
The door she'll undo, to her knight so true,
On the eve of good St John.'—

"I cannot come; I must not come;
I dare not come to thee;
On the eve of St John I must wander alone;
In thy bower I may not be.'—

"Now, out on thee, faint-hearted knight!
Thou shouldst not say me nay;
For the eve is sweet, and when lovers meet,
Is worth the whole summer's day.

"And I'll chain the blood-hound, and the warder shall not
sound,
And rushes shall be strew'd on the stair;
So, by the black rood-stone,^a and by holy St John,
I conjure thee, my love, to be there!—

"Though the blood-hound be mute, and the rush beneath my
foot,
And the warder his bugle should not blow,
Yet there sleepeth a priest in the chamber to the east,
And my footstep he would know.'—

^a The black-rood of Melrose was a crucifix of black marble, and of superior sanctity.

"O fear not the priest who sleepeth to the east !
 For to Dryburgh the way he has ta'en ;
 And there to say mass, till three days do pass,
 For the soul of a knight that is slayne."—

"He turn'd him around, and grimly he frown'd ;
 Then he laugh'd right scornfully—
 He who says the mass-rite for the soul of that knight,
 May as well say mass for me :

"At the lone midnight hour, when bad spirits have power,
 In thy chamber will I be."—
 With that he was gone, and my lady left alone,
 And no more did I see."

Then changed, I trow, was that bold Baron's brow,
 From the dark to the blood-red high :
 "Now, tell me the mien of the knight thou hast seen,
 For, by Mary, he shall die !"

"His arms shone full bright, in the beacon's red light ;
 His plume it was scarlet and blue ;
 On his shield was a hound, in a silver leash bound,
 And his crest was a branch of the yew."—

"Thou liest, thou liest, thou little foot-page,
 Loud dost thou lie to me !
 For that knight is cold, and low laid in the mould,
 All under the Eildon Tree."—^a

"Yet hear but my word, my noble lord !
 For I heard her name his name ;
 And that lady bright, she called the knight
 Sir Richard of Coldinghame."—

The bold Baron's brow then changed, I trow,
 From high blood-red to pale—
 "The grave is deep and dark, and the corpse is stiff and
 stark ;
 So I may not trust thy tale.

"Where fair Tweed flows round holy Melrose,
 And Eildon slopes to the plain,
 Full three nights ago, by some secret foe,
 That gay gallant was slain.

"The varying light deceived thy sight,
 And the wild winds drown'd the name ;
 For the Dryburgh bells ring, and the white monks do sing,
 For Sir Richard of Coldinghame !"

^a Eildon is a high hill, terminating in three conical summits, immediately above the town of Melrose, where are the admired ruins of a magnificent monastery. Eildon Tree is said to be the spot where Thomas the Rhymer uttered his prophecies.

He pass'd the court-gate, and he oped the tower gate,
And he mounted the narrow stair,
To the bartizan-seat, where, with maids that on her wait,
He found his lady fair.

That lady sat in mournful mood ;
Look'd over hill and vale ;
Over Tweed's fair flood, and Mertoun's wood,
And all down Teviotdale.

"Now hail, now hail, thou lady bright!"—
"Now hail, thou Baron true!"
What news, what news, from Ancram fight?
What news from the bold Buccleuch?"—

"The Ancram Moor is red with gore,
For many a southren fell ;
And Buccleuch has charged us, evermore,
To watch our beacons well."—

The lady blush'd red, but nothing she said ;
Nor added the Baron a word :
Then she stepp'd down the stair to her chamber fair.
And so did her moody lord.

In sleep the lady mourn'd, and the Baron toss'd and
turn'd,
And oft to himself he said,—
"The worms around him creep, and his bloody grave is
deep
It cannot give up the dead!"—

It was near the ringing of matin-bell,
The night was wellnigh done,
When a heavy sleep on that Baron fell,
On the eve of good St John.

The lady look'd through the chamber fair,
By the light of a dying flame ;
And she was aware of a knight stood there—
Sir Richard of Coldinghame !

"Alas ! away, away !" she cried,
"For the holy Virgin's sake !"—
"Lady, I know who sleeps by thy side ;
But, lady, he will not awake.

"By Eildon Tree, for long nights three,
In bloody grave have I lain ;
The mass and the death-prayer are said for me,
But, lady, they are said in vain.

"By the Baron's brand, near Tweed's fair strand,
Most foully slain, I fell ;

And my restless sprite on the beacon's height,
For a space is doom'd to dwell.

"At our trysting place," for a certain space,
I must wander to and fro;
But I had not had power to come to thy bower,
Had'st thou not conjured me so."—

Love master'd fear—her brow she cross'd;
"How, Richard, hast thou sped?
And art thou saved, or art thou lost?"
The vision shook his head!

"Who spillesh life, shall forfeit life;
So bid thy lord believe:
That lawless love is guilt above,
This awful sign receive."

He laid his left palm on an oaken beam;
His right upon her hand;
The lady shrunk, and fainting sunk,
For it scorch'd like a fiery brand.

The sable score, of fingers four,
Remains on that board impress'd;
And for evermore that lady wore
A covering on her wrist.

There is a nun in Dryburgh bower,
Ne'er looks upon the sun;
There is a monk in Melrose tower,
He speaketh word to none.

That nun, who ne'er beholds the day,³
That monk, who speaks to none—
That nun was Smaylho'me's Lady gay,
That monk the bold Baron.

FROM CADYOW CASTLE.

THE ruins of Cadyow or Cadzow Castle, the ancient baronial residence of the family of Hamilton, are situated upon the precipitous banks of the river Evan, about two miles above its junction with the Clyde. It was dismantled, in the conclusion of the Civil Wars, during the reign of the unfortunate Mary, to whose cause the house of Hamilton devoted themselves with a generous zeal, which occasioned their temporary obscurity, and very nearly their total ruin.

In detailing the death of the Regent Murray, which is made the subject of the following ballad, it would be injustice to my

³ *Trysting-place*.--Place of rendezvous.

reader to use other words than those of Dr Robertson, whose account of that memorable event forms a beautiful piece of historical painting:—

“Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh was the person who committed this barbarous action. He had been condemned to death soon after the battle of Langside, as we have already related, and owed his life to the Regent’s clemency. But part of his estate had been bestowed upon one of the Regent’s favourites, who seized his house, and turned out his wife, naked, in a cold night, into the open fields, where, before next morning, she became furiously mad. This injury made a deeper impression on him than the benefit he had received, and from that moment he vowed to be revenged of the Regent. Party rage strengthened and inflamed his private resentment. His kinsmen, the Hamiltons, applauded the enterprise. The maxims of that age justified the most desperate course he could take to obtain vengeance. He followed the Regent for some time, and watched for an opportunity to strike the blow. He resolved at last to wait till his enemy should arrive at Linlithgow, through which he was to pass in his way from Stirling to Edinburgh. He took his stand in a wooden gallery, which had a window towards the street; spread a feather-bed on the floor to hinder the noise of his feet from being heard; hung up a black cloth behind him, that his shadow might not be observed from without; and after all this preparation, calmly expected the Regent’s approach, who had lodged, during the night, in a house not far distant. Some indistinct information of the danger which threatened him had been conveyed to the Regent, and he paid so much regard to it, that he resolved to return by the same gate through which he had entered, and to fetch a compass round the town. But, as the crowd about the gate was great, and he himself unacquainted with fear, he proceeded directly along the street; and the throng of people obliging him to move very slowly, gave the assassin time to take so true an aim, that he shot him, with a single bullet, through the lower part of his belly, and killed the horse of a gentleman who rode on his other side. His followers instantly endeavoured to break into the house whence the blow had come; but they found the door strongly barricadoed, and, before it could be forced open, Hamilton had mounted a fleet horse, which stood ready for him at a back passage, and was got far beyond their reach. The Regent died the same night of his wound.”—*History of Scotland*, book v.

CADYOW CASTLE.

ADDRESSED TO

THE RIGHT HON. LADY ANNE HAMILTON.

WHEN princely Hamilton’s abode
 Ennobled Cadyow’s Gothic towers,
 The song went round, the goblet flow’d,
 And revel sped the laughing hours.

Then, thrilling to the harp’s gay sound,
 So sweetly rung each vaulted wall,

And echoed light the dancer's bound,
As mirth and music cheer'd the hall.

But Cadyow's towers, in ruins laid,
And vaults, by ivy mantled o'er,
Thrill to the music of the shade,
Or echo Evan's hoarser roar.

Yet still, of Cadyow's faded fame,
You bid me tell a minstrel tale,
And tune my harp, of Border frame,
On the wild banks of Evandale.

For thou, from scenes of courtly pride,
From pleasure's lighter scenes, canst turn,
To draw oblivion's pall aside,
And mark the long forgotten urn.

Then, noble maid! at thy command,
Again the crumbled halls shall rise;
Lo! as on Evan's banks we stand,
The past returns—the present flies.

Where, with the rock's wood-cover'd side,
Were blended late the ruins green,
Rise turrets in fantastic pride,
And feudal banners flaunt between:

Where the rude torrent's brawling course
Was shagg'd with thorn and tangling sloe,
The ashler buttress braves its force,
And ramparts frown in battled row.

'Tis night—the shade of keep and spire
Obscurely dance on Evan's stream;
And on the wave the warder's fire
Is chequering the moonlight beam.

Fades slow their light; the east is gray;
The weary warder leaves his tower;
Steeds snort; uncoupled stag-hounds bay,
And merry hunters quit the bower.

The drawbridge falls—they hurry out—
Clatters each plank and swinging chain,
As, dashing o'er, the jovial rout
Urge the shy steed, and slack the rein.

First of his troop, the Chief rode on;^a
His shouting merry-men throng behind;

^a The head of the family of Hamilton, at this period, was James, Earl of Arran, Duke of Chatelherault, in France, and first peer of the Scottish realm. In 1569, he was appointed by Queen Mary her lieutenant-general in Scotland, under the singular title of her adopted father.

The steed of princely Hamilton
Was fleet^aer than the mountain wind.

From the thick copse the roebucks bound,
The startled red-deer scuds the plain,
For the hoarse bugle's warrior-sound
Has roused their mountain haunts again.

Through the huge oaks of Evandale,
Whose limbs a thousand years have worn,
What sullen roar comes down the gale,
And drowns the hunter's pealing horn?

Mightiest of all the beasts of chase,
That roam in woody Caledon,
Crashing the forest in his race,
The Mountain Bull comes thundering on.

Fierce, on the hunter's quiver'd band,
He rolls his eyes of swarthy glow,
Spurns, with black hoof and horn, the sand,
And tosses high his mane of snow.

Aim'd well, the Chieftain's lance has flown;
Struggling in blood the savage lies;
His roar is sunk in hollow groan—
Sound, merry huntsmen! sound the *pryse*!^a

'Tis noon—against the knotted oak
The hunters rest the idle spear;
Curls through the trees the slender smoke,
Where yeomen dight the woodland cheer.

Proudly the Chieftain mark'd his clan,
On greenwood lap all careless thrown,
Yet miss'd his eye the boldest man
That bore the name of Hamilton.

“Why fills not Bothwellhaugh his place,
Still wont our weal and woe to share?
Why comes he not our sport to grace?
Why shares he not our hunter's fare?”—

Stern Claud replied,¹ with darkening face,
(Grey Paisley's haughty lord was he,)

“At merry feast, or buxom chase,
No more the warrior wilt thou see.

“Few suns have set since Woodhouselee²
Saw Bothwellhaugh's bright goblets foam,

^a The note blown at the death of the game.

¹ See Note 1 of the “NOTES TO CADYOW CASTLE” in the Appendix. The figures of reference throughout the poem relate to further Notes in the Appendix.

- When to his hearths, in social glee,
The war-worn soldier turn'd him home.
- "There, wan from her maternal throes,
His Margaret, beautiful and mild,
Sate in her bower, a pallid rose,
And peaceful nursed her new-born child.
- "O change accursed! past are those days:
False Murray's ruthless spoilers came,
And, for the hearth's domestic blaze,
Ascends destruction's volumed flame.
- "What sheeted phantom wanders wild,
Where mountain Eske through woodland frown?
Her arms enfold a shadowy child—
Oh! is it she, the pallid rose?
- "The wilder'd traveller sees her glide,
And hears her feeble voice with awe—
'Revenge,' she cries, 'on Murray's pride!
And woe for injured Bothwellhaugh!'"
- He ceased—and cries of rage and grief
Burst mingling from the kindred band,
And half arose the kindling Chieft,
And half unsheathed his Arran brand.
- But who, o'er bush, o'er stream and rock,
Rides headlong, with resistless speed,
Whose bloody poniard's frantic stroke
Drives to the leap his jaded steed;³
- Whose cheek is pale, whose eyeballs glare,
As one some vision'd sight that saw,
Whose hands are bloody, loose his hair? —
'Tis he! 'tis he! 'tis Bothwellhaugh!

FROM THE GRAY BROTHER.

- THE Pope he was saying the high, high mass,
All on Saint Peter's day,
With the power to him given, by the saints in heaven,
To wash men's sins away.
- The Pope he was saying the blessed mass,
And the people kneel'd around,
And from each man's soul his sins did pass,
As he kiss'd the holy ground.

And all, among the crowded throng,
Was still both limb and tongue,
While, through vaulted roof and aisles aloof,
The holy accents rung.

At the holiest word he quiver'd for fear,
And falter'd in the sound—
And, when he would the chalice rear,
He dropp'd it to the ground.

“The breath of one of evil deed
Pollutes our sacred day;
He has no portion in our creed,
No part in what I say.

“A being, whom no blessed word
To ghostly peace can bring;
A wretch, at whose approach abhorr'd,
Recoils each holy thing.

“Up, up, unhappy ! haste, arise !
My adjuration fear !
I charge thee not to stop my voice,
Nor longer tarry here !”—

Amid them all a pilgrim kneel'd,
In gown of sackcloth gray ;
Far journeying from his native field,
He first saw Rome that day.

For forty days and nights so drear,
I ween he had not spoke,
And, save with bread and water clear
His fast he ne'er had broke.

Amid the penitential flock
Seem'd none more bent to pray ;
But, when the Holy Father spoke,
He rose and went his way.

Again unto his native land
His weary course he drew,
To Lothian's fair and fertile strand,
And Pentland's mountains blue.

His unblest feet his native seat,
'Mid Eske's fair woods, regain ;
Thro' woods more fair no stream more sweet
Rolls to the eastern main.

And lords to meet the pilgrim came,
And vassals bent the knee ;
For all 'mid Scotland's chiefs of fame,
Was none more famed than he.

FRAGMENTS.

FROM BOTHWELL CASTLE.

WHEN fruitful Clydesdale's apple-bowers
Are mellowing in the noon ;
When sighs round Pembroke's ruin'd towers
The sultry breath of June ;

When Clyde, despite his sheltering wood,
Must leave his channel dry ;
And vainly o'er the limpid flood
The angler guides his fly ;

If chance by Bothwell's lovely braes
A wanderer thou hast been,
Or hid thee from the summer's blaze
In Blantyre's bowers of green,

Full where the copsewood opens wild
Thy pilgrim step hath staid,
Where Bothwell's towers, in ruin piled,
O'erlook the verdant glade ;

And many a tale of love and fear
Hath mingled with the scene—
Of Bothwell's banks that bloom'd so dear,
And Bothwell's bonny Jean.

O, if with rugged minstrel lays
Unsated be thy ear,
And thou of deeds of other days
Another tale wilt hear.—

Then all beneath the spreading beech,
Flung careless on the lea,
The Gothic muse the tale shall teach
Of Bothwell's sisters three.

FROM DRAMA, DOOM OF DEVORGOIL.

ACT III. SCENE IV.

ERICK. Tremble not, son, but hear me !

[He strikes the wall; it opens, and discovers the Treasure-Chamber.]

There lies piled
The wealth I brought from wasted Cumberland,
Enough to reinstate thy ruin'd fortunes.—
Cast from thine high-born brows that peasant bonnet,
Throw from thy noble grasp the peasant's staff,
O'er all, withdraw thine hand from that mean mate,
Whom in an hour of reckless desperation
Thy fortunes cast thee on. This do,
And be as great as ere was Devorgoil,
When Devorgoil was richest !

DURWARD. Lord Oswald, thou art tempted by a fiend,
Who doth assail thee on thy weakest side,—
Thy pride of lineage, and thy love of grandeur.
Stand fast—resist—contemn his fatal offers !

ELEANOR. Urge him not, father ; if the sacrifice
Of such a wasted woe-worn wretch as I am,
Can save him from the abyss of misery,
Upon whose verge he's tottering, let me wander
An unacknowledged outcast from his castle,
Even to the humble cottage I was born in.

OSWALD. No, Ellen, no—it is not thus they part,
Whose hearts and souls, disasters borne in common
Have knit together, close as summer saplings
Are twined in union by the eddying tempest.—
Spirit of Erick, while thou bear'st his shape,
I'll answer with no ruder conjuration
Thy impious counsel, other than with these words,
Depart, and tempt me not !

ERICK. Then fate will have her course.—Fall, massive grate,
Yield them the tempting view of these rich treasures,
But bar them from possession !

[A portcullis falls before the door of the Treasure-Chamber.]

FROM ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN.

THE SECRET TRIBUNAL.

MEASURES of good and evil,
 Bring the square, the line, the level,—
 Rear the altar, dig the trench,
 Blood both stone and ditch shall drench,
 Cubits six from end to end,
 Must the fatal bench extend,—
 Cubits six, from side to side,
 Judge and culprit must divide.
 On the east the Court assembles,
 On the west the Accused trembles—
 Answer, brethren, all and one,
 Is the ritual rightly done?

On life and soul, on blood and bone,
 One for all, and all for one,
 We warrant this is rightly done.

How wears the night?—Doth morning shine
 In early radiance on the Rhine?
 What music floats upon his tide?
 Do birds the tardy morning chide?
 Brethren, look out from hill and height,
 And answer true, how wears the night?

The night is old; on Rhine's broad breast
 Glance drowsy stars which long to rest.
 No beams are twinkling in the east.
 There is a voice upon the flood,
 The stern still call of blood for blood;
 'Tis time we listen the behest.

Up, then, up! When day's at rest,
 'Tis time that such as we are watchers;
 Rise to judgment, brethren, rise!
 Vengeance knows not sleepy eyes,
 He and night are matchers.

Chap. xx.

THE FORAY.

THE last of our steers on the board has been spread,
 And the last flask of wine in our goblet is red;
 Up! up, my brave kinsmen! belt swords and begone,
 There are dangers to dare, and there's spoil to be won,

The eyes, that so lately mix'd glances with ours,
 For a space must be dim, as they gaze from the towers,
 And strive to distinguish through tempest and gloom,
 The prance of the steed, and the toss of the plume.

The rain is descending ; the wind rises loud ;
 And the moon her red beacon has veil'd with a cloud ;
 'Tis the better, my mates ! for the warder's dull eye
 Shall in confidence slumber, nor dream we are nigh.

Our steeds are impatient ! I hear my blithe Grey !
 There is life in his hoof-clang, and hope in his neigh ;
 Like the flash of a meteor, the glance of his mane
 Shall marshal your march through the darkness and rain.

The drawbridge has dropp'd, the bugle has blown ;
 One pledge is to quaff yet—then mount and begone !—
 To their honour and peace, that shall rest with the slain ;
 To their health and their glee, that see Teviot again !

WAR-SONG

OF THE

ROYAL EDINBURGH LIGHT DRAGOONS.

THE following War-Song was written during the apprehension of an invasion. The corps of volunteers to which it was addressed was raised in 1797, consisting of Gentlemen, mounted and armed at their own expense. It still subsists, as the Right Troop of the Royal Mid-Lothian Light Cavalry, commanded by the Honourable Lieutenant-Colonel Dundas. The noble and constitutional measure of arming freemen in defence of their own rights, was nowhere more successful than in Edinburgh, which furnished a force of 3000 armed and disciplined volunteers, including a regiment of cavalry, from the city and county, and two corps of artillery, each capable of serving twelve guns. To such a force, above all others, might, in similar circumstances, be applied the exhortation of our ancient Galgacus—" *Proinde ituri in aciem, et majores vestros et posteros cogitate.*" 1812.

WAR-SONG.

To horse ! to horse ! the standard flies,
 The bugles sound the call ;
 The Gallic navy stems the seas,
 The voice of battle's on the breeze,
 Arouse ye, one and all !

From high Dunedin's towers we come,
 A band of brothers true ;
 Our casques the leopard's spoils surround,
 With Scotland's hardy thistle crown'd ;
 We boast the red and blue.^a

Though tamely couch'd to Gallia's frown
 Dull Holland's tardy train ;

^a The royal colours.

Their ravish'd toys though Romans mourn;
 Though gallant Switzers vainly spurn,
 And, foaming, gnaw the chain;

Oh! had they mark'd the avenging call^a
 Their brethren's murder gave,
 Disunion ne'er their ranks had mown,
 Nor patriot valour, desperate grown,
 Sought freedom in the grave!

Shall we, too, bend the stubborn head,
 In Freedom's temple born,
 Dress our pale cheek in timid smile,
 To hail a master in our isle,
 Or brook a victor's scorn?

No! though destruction o'er the land
 Come pouring as a flood,
 The sun, that sees our falling day,
 Shall mark our sabres' deadly sway,
 And set that night in blood.

For gold let Gallia's legions fight,
 Or plunder's bloody gain;
 Unbribed, unbought, our swords we draw,
 To guard our king, to fence our law,
 Nor shall their edge be vain.

If ever breath of British gale
 Shall fan the tri-color,
 Or footstep of invader rude,
 With rapine foul, and red with blood,
 Pollute our happy shore,—

Then farewell home! and farewell friends!
 Adieu, each tender tie!
 Resolved, we mingle in the tide,
 Where charging squadrons furious ride,
 To conquer or to die.

To horse! to horse! the sabres gleam;
 High sounds our bugle-call;
 Combined by honour's sacred tie,
 Our word is *Laus and Liberty!*
 March forward, one and all!

^a The allusion is to the massacre of the Swiss Guards, on the fatal 10th August 1792. It is painful, but not useless, to remark, that the passive temper with which the Swiss regarded the death of their bravest countrymen, mercilessly slaughtered in discharge of their duty, encouraged and authorized the progressive injustice, by which the Alps, once the seat of the most virtuous and free people upon the Continent, have at length been converted into the citadel of a foreign and military despot. A state degraded is half enslaved.—1812.

APPENDIX.



THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL—MARMION—

THE LADY OF THE LAKE—

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK—ROKEBY—

THE LORD OF THE ISLES—THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN—

EVE OF ST. JOHN—CADYOW CASTLE.



NOTES

TO

THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

NOTE 1, page 36.

The feast was over in Branksome tower.

IN the reign of James I., Sir William Scott of Buccleuch, chief of the clan bearing that name, exchanged, with Sir Thomas Inglis of Manor, the estate of Murdiestone, in Lanarkshire, for one-half of the barony of Branksome, or Brankholm, lying upon the Teviot, about three miles above Hawick. He was probably induced to this transaction from the vicinity of Branksome to the extensive domain which he possessed in Ettrick Forest and in Teviotdale. In the former district he held by occupancy the estate of Buccleuch, and much of the forest land on the river Ettrick. In Teviotdale, he enjoyed the barony of Eckford, by a grant from Robert II. to his ancestor, Walter Scott of Kirkurd, for the apprehending of Gilbert Ridderford, confirmed by Robert III. 3d May 1424. Tradition imputes the exchange betwixt Scott and Inglis to a conversation, in which the latter—a man, it would appear, of a mild and forbearing nature—complained much of the injuries to which he was exposed from the English Borderers, who frequently plundered his lands of Branksome. Sir William Scott instantly offered him the estate of Murdiestone, in exchange for that which was subject to such egregious inconvenience. When the bargain was completed, he dryly remarked that the cattle in Cumberland were as good as those of Teviotdale; and proceeded to commence a system of reprisals upon the English, which was regularly pursued by his successors. In the next reign, James II. granted to Sir Walter Scott of Branksome, and to Sir David, his son, the remaining half of the barony of Branksome, to be held in blanché for the payment of a red rose. The cause assigned for the grant is, their brave and faithful exertions in favour of the King against the house of Douglas, with whom James had been recently tugging for the throne of Scotland. This charter is dated the 2d February 1443; and, in the same month, part of the barony of Langholm, and many lands in Lanarkshire, were conferred upon Sir Walter and his son by the same monarch.

NOTE 2, page 36.

*Nine-and-twenty knights of fame
Hung their shields in Branksome-hall.*

The ancient barons of Buccleuch, both from feudal splendour and from their frontier situation, retained in their household at Branksome, a number of gentlemen of their own name, who held lands from their chief, for the military service of watching and warding his castle.

NOTE 3, page 37.

“— with Jedwood-axe at saddle-bow.”

“Of a truth,” says Froissart, “the Scottish cannot boast great skill with the bow, but rather bear axes, with which, in time of need they give heavy strokes.” The Jedwood-axe was a sort of partisan, used by horsemen, as appears from the arms of Jedburgh, which bear a cavalier mounted, and armed with this weapon. It is also called a Jedwood or Jeddart staff.

NOTE 4, page 37.

*They watch, against Southern force and guile,
Lest Scroop, or Howard, or Percy's powers,
Threaten Branksome's lordly towers,
From Warkworth, or Naworth, or merry Carlisle.*

Branksome Castle was continually exposed to the attacks of the English, both from its situation and the restless military disposition of its inhabitants, who were seldom on good terms with their neighbours.

NOTE 5, page 37.

*Rards long shall tell,
How Lord Walter fell.*

Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch succeeded to his grandfather, Sir David, in 1493. He was a brave and powerful baron, and Warden of the West Marches of Scotland. His death was the consequence of a feud betwixt the Scotts and Kerrs.

NOTE 6, page 38.

*While Cessford owns the rule of Carr,
While Ettrick boasts the line of Scott.*

Among other expedients resorted to for stanching the feud betwixt the Scotts and the Kerrs, was a bond executed in 1529, between the heads of each clan, binding themselves to perform reciprocally the four principal pilgrimages of Scotland, for the benefit of the souls of those of the opposite name who had fallen in the quarrel. But either this indenture never took effect, or else the feud was renewed shortly afterwards. The family of Kerr, or Carr, was very powerful on the Border.

NOTE 7, page 38.

*He learn'd the art that none may name,
In Padua, far beyond the sea.*

Padua was long supposed, by the Scottish peasants, to be the principal school of necromancy.

NOTE 8, page 39.

*His form no darkening shadow traced
Upon the sunny wall!*

The shadow of a necromancer was independent of the sun. Glycas informs us that Simon Magus caused his shadow to go before him, making people believe it was an attendant spirit.

NOTE 9, page 41.

*By wily turns, by desperate bounds,
Had baffled Percy's best blood-hounds.*

The kings and heroes of Scotland, as well as the Border-riders, were sometimes obliged to study how to evade the pursuit of blood-hounds. Barbour informs us, that Robert Bruce was repeatedly tracked by sleuth-dogs. On one occasion, he escaped by wading a bow-shot down a brook, and ascending into a tree by a branch which overhung the water; thus, leaving no trace on land of his footsteps, he baffled the scent. A sure way of stopping the dog was to spill blood upon the track, which destroyed the discriminating fineness of his scent. A captive was sometimes sacrificed on such occasions. Henry the Minstrel tells a romantic story of Wallace, founded on this circumstance:—The hero's little band had been joined by an Irishman, named Fawdoun, or Fadzean, a dark, savage, and suspicious character. After a sharp skirmish at Black-erne Side, Wallace was forced to retreat with only sixteen followers, the English pursuing with a Border blood-hound. In the retreat, Fawdoun, tired, or affecting to be so, would go no farther, and Wallace having in vain argued with him, in hasty anger struck

off his head, and continued the retreat. When the English came up, their hound stayed upon the dead body:—

“The sleuth stopped at Fawdon, still she stood,
Nor further would fra time she fund the blood.”

NOTE 10, page 44.

And sought the convent's lonely wall.

The ancient and beautiful monastery of Melrose was founded by King David I. its ruins afford the finest specimen of Gothic architecture and Gothic sculpture which Scotland can boast. The stone of which it is built, though it has resisted the weather for so many ages, retains perfect sharpness, so that even the most minute ornaments seem as entire as when newly wrought.

NOTE 11, page 44.

Then view St David's ruin'd pile.

David I. of Scotland purchased the reputation of sanctity, by founding, and liberally endowing, not only the monastery of Melrose, but those of Kelso, Jedburgh, and many others; which led to the well-known observation of his successor, that he was a *sore saint for the crown*.

NOTE 12, page 47.

O gallant Chief of Otterburne!

The desperate battle of Otterburne was fought 15th August 1388, between Henry Percy, called Hotspur, and James, Earl of Douglas. Both these renowned champions, rivals in military fame, were at the head of a chosen body of troops. The issue of the conflict is well known: Percy was made prisoner, and the Scots won the day, dearly purchased by the death of their gallant general, the Earl of Douglas, who was slain in the action. He was buried at Melrose beneath the high altar.

NOTE 13, page 47.

—— *Dark Knight of Liddesdale.*

William Douglas, the Knight of Liddesdale, flourished during the reign of David II., and was so distinguished by his valour that he was called the Flower of Chivalry. But he tarnished his renown by the murder of Sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie, originally his friend and brother in arms. The King had conferred upon Ramsay the sheriffdom of Teviotdale, to which Douglas pretended some claim. In revenge of this preference, the Knight of Liddesdale came down upon Ramsay, while he was administering justice at Hawick, seized and carried him off to his remote and inaccessible castle of Hermitage, where he threw his unfortunate prisoner, horse and man, into a dungeon, leaving him to perish of hunger. So weak was the royal authority, that David, although highly incensed at this atrocious murder, found himself obliged to appoint the Knight of Liddesdale successor to his victim, as Sheriff of Teviotdale. But he was soon after slain, while hunting in Ettrick Forest, by his own godson and chieftain, William, Earl of Douglas, in revenge, according to some authors, of Ramsay's murder; although a popular tradition, preserved in a ballad quoted by Godscroft, some parts of which are still preserved, ascribes the resentment of the Earl to jealousy.

NOTE 14, page 47.

—— *The wondrous Michael Scott.*

Sir Michael Scott of Balwearie flourished during the 13th century, and was one of the ambassadors sent to bring the Maid of Norway to Scotland upon the death of Alexander III. By a poetical anachronism, he is here placed in a later era. He was a man of much learning, chiefly acquired in foreign countries. He wrote a commentary upon Aristotle, printed at Venice in 1496; and several treatises upon natural philosophy, from which he appears to have been addicted to the abstruse studies of judicial astrology,

alchemy, physiognomy, and chiromancy. Hence he passed among his contemporaries for a skilful magician. Dempster informs us, that he remembers to have heard in his youth, that the magic books of Michael Scott were still in existence, but could not be opened without danger, on account of the malignant fiends who were thereby invoked. Tradition varies concerning the place of his burial; some contending for Home Coltrane, in Cumberland; others for Melrose Abbey. But all agree, that his books of magic were interred in his grave, or preserved in the convent where he died.

NOTE 15, page 47.

The words that cleft Eildon hills in three.

Michael Scott was, once upon a time, much embarrassed by a spirit, for whom he was under the necessity of finding constant employment. He commanded him to build a *cauld*, or dam-head, across the Tweed at Kelso; it was accomplished in one night, and still does honour to the infernal architect. Michael next ordered, that Eildon hill, which was then a uniform cone, should be divided into three. Another night was sufficient to part its summit into the three picturesque peaks which it now bears. At length the enchanter conquered this indefatigable demon, by employing him in the hopeless and endless task of making ropes out of sea-sand.

NOTE 16, page 52.

The Baron's Dwarf his courser held.

The idea of Lord Cranstoun's Goblin Page is taken from a being called Gilpin Horner, who appeared, and made some stay, at a farm-house among the Border mountains.

NOTE 17, page 56.

All was delusion, nought was truth.

Glamour, in the legends of Scottish superstition, means the magic power of imposing on the eyesight of the spectators, so that the appearance of an object shall be totally different from the reality. To such a charm the ballad of Johnny Fa' imputes the fascination of the lovely Countess, who eloped with that gipsy leader:—

“Sae soon as they saw her wheel-far'd face,
They cast the *glamour* o'er her.”

NOTE 18, page 57.

The running stream dissolved the spell.

It is a firm article of popular faith, that no enchantment can subsist in a living stream. Nay, if you can interpose a brook betwixt you and witches, spectres, or even fiends, you are in perfect safety. Burns's inimitable *Tam o' Shanter* turns entirely upon such a circumstance.

NOTE 19, page 58.

*He never counted him a man,
Would strike below the knee.*

To wound an antagonist in the thigh, or leg, was reckoned contrary to the law of arms. In a tilt betwixt Gawain Michael, an English squire, and Joachim Cathore, a Frenchman, “they met at the speare poyntes rudely; the French squyer justed right pleasantly; the Englishman ran too lowe, for he strak the Frenchman depe into the thigh. Wherewith the Erie of Buckingham was right sore displeased, and so were all the other lords, and sayde how it was shamefully done.”—*Froissart*, vol. i. chap. 366.

NOTE 20, page 61.

On Penchryst glows a bale of fire.

Bale, beacon-fagot. The Border beacons, from their number and position

formed a sort of telegraphic communication with Edinburgh.—The act of Parliament 1455, c. 48, directs, that one bale or fagot shall be warning of the approach of the English in any manner; two bales, that they are *coming indeed*; four bales, blazing beside each other, that the enemy are in great force.

NOTE 21, page 62.

*On many a cairn's grey pyramid,
Where urns of mighty chiefs lie hid.*

The cairns, or piles of loose stones, which crown the summit of most of our Scottish hills, and are found in other remarkable situations, seem usually, though not universally, to have been sepulchral monuments. Six flat stones are commonly found in the centre, forming a cavity of greater or smaller dimensions, in which an urn is often placed. The author is possessed of one, discovered beneath an immense cairn at Roughlee, in Liddesdale. It is of the most barbarous construction; the middle of the substance alone having been subjected to the fire, over which, when hardened, the artist had laid an inner and outer coat of unbaked clay, etched with some very rude ornaments, his skill apparently being inadequate to baking the vase, when completely finished. The contents were bones and ashes, and a quantity of beads made of coal. This seems to have been a barbarous imitation of the Roman fashion of sepulture.

NOTE 22, page 63.

Fell by the side of great Dundee.

The Viscount of Dundee, slain in the battle of Killcrankie.

NOTE 23, page 63.

*For pathless marsh and mountain cell,
The peasant left his lowly shed.*

The morasses were the usual refuge of the Border herdsmen, on the approach of an English army.—(*Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. i. p. 593. Caves, hewed in the most dangerous and inaccessible places, also afforded an occasional retreat. Such caverns may be seen in the precipitous banks of the Teviot at Sunlaws, upon the Ale at Ancram, upon the Jed at Hundalee, and in many other places upon the Border. The banks of the Eske, at Gorton and Hawthornden, are hollowed into similar recesses.

NOTE 24, page 64.

Watt Tinninn.

This person was, in my younger days, the theme of many a fireside tale. He was a retainer of the Buccleuch family, and held for his Border service a small tower on the frontiers of Liddesdale. Watt was, by profession, a *sutor*, but, by inclination and practice, an archer and warrior. Upon one occasion, the captain of Bewcastle, military governor of that wild district of Cumberland, is said to have made an incursion into Scotland, in which he was defeated and forced to fly. Watt Tinninn pursued him closely through a dangerous morass; the captain, however, gained the firm ground; and seeing Tinninn dismounted, and floundering in the bog, used these words of insult:—"Sutor Watt, ye cannot sew your boots; the heels *risp*, and the seams *rise*."—"If I cannot sew," retorted Tinninn, discharging a shaft, which nailed the captain's thigh to his saddle,—"If I cannot sew, I can *yerk*!"†

NOTE 25, page 64.

*His wife, stout, ruddy, and dark-brow'd,
Of silver brooch and bracelet proud.*

As the Borderers were indifferent about the furniture of their habitations,

* *Risp*, creak.—*Rise*, tear.

† *Yerk*, to twitch, as shoemakers do, in securing the stitches of their work.

so much exposed to be burned and plundered they were proportionally anxious to display splendour in decorating and ornamenting their females. —See *LESLEY de Moribus Limitaneorum*.

NOTE 26, page 64.

Belted Will Howard.

Lord William Howard, third son of Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, succeeded to Naworth Castle, and a large domain annexed to it, in right of his wife Elizabeth, sister of George Lord Dacre, who died without heirs-male, in the 11th of Queen Elizabeth. By a poetical anachronism, he is introduced into the romance a few years earlier than he actually flourished. He was warden of the Western Marches; and, from the rigour with which he repressed the Border excesses, the name of Belted Will Howard is still famous in our traditions.

NOTE 27, page 64.

Lord Dacre.

The well-known name of Dacre is derived from the exploits of one of their ancestors at the siege of Acre, or Ptolemais, under Richard Cœur de Lion.

NOTE 28, page 65.

The German hackbut-men.

In the wars with Scotland, Henry VIII. and his successors employed numerous bands of mercenary troops. At the battle of Pinky there were in the English army six hundred hackbutterers on foot, and two hundred on horseback, composed chiefly of foreigners.

NOTE 29, page 68.

Their gathering word was Bellenden.

Bellenden is situated near the head of Borthwick water, and being in the centre of the possessions of the Scotts, was frequently used as their place of rendezvous and gathering word.

NOTE 30, page 71.

That he may suffer march-treason pain.

Several species of offences, peculiar to the Border, constituted what was called march-treason. Among others, was the crime of riding, or causing to ride, against the opposite country during the time of truce.

NOTE 31, page 72.

Knighthood he took of Douglas' sword.

The dignity of knighthood, according to the original institution, had this peculiarity, that it did not flow from the monarch, but could be conferred by one who himself possessed it, upon any squire who, after due probation, was found to merit the honour of chivalry. Latterly, this power was confined to generals, who were wont to create knights bannerets after or before an engagement.

NOTE 32, page 72.

When English blood swell'd Ancram's ford.

The battle of Ancram Moor, or Penielheuch, was fought A.D. 1545. The English, commanded by Sir Ralph Evers and Sir Brian Latoun, were totally routed, and both their leaders slain in the action. The Scottish army was commanded by Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus, assisted by the Laird of Buccleuch and Norman Leslie.

NOTE 33, page 73.

*For who, in field or foray slack,
Saw the Blanche lion d'er fall back?*

This was the cognizance of the noble house of Howard in all its branches. The crest, or bearing, of a warrior, was often used as a *nomme de guerre*.

NOTE 34, page 77.

*The Bloody Heart blazed in the van,
Announcing Douglas, dreaded name.*

The chief of this potent race of heroes, about the date of the poem, was Archibald Douglas, seventh Earl of Angus, a man of great courage and activity. The Bloody Heart was the well-known cognizance of the House of Douglas, assumed from the time of good Lord James, to whose care Robert Bruce committed his heart, to be carried to the Holy Land.

NOTE 35, page 77.

The Seven Spears of Wedderburne.

Sir David Home of Wedderburn, slain in the fatal battle of Flodden, left seven sons, who were called the Seven Spears of Wedderburne.

NOTE 36, page 77.

— *Clarence's Plantagenet.*

At the battle of Beaugé, in France, Thomas, Duke of Clarence, brother to Henry V., was unhorsed by Sir John Swinton of Swinton, who distinguished him by a coronet set with precious stones, which he wore around his helmet. The family of Swinton is one of the most ancient in Scotland, and produced many celebrated warriors.

NOTE 37, page 77.

And shouting still, "A Home! a Home!"

The Earls of Home, as descendants of the Dunbars, ancient Earls of March, carried a lion rampant, argent; but, as a difference, changed the colour of the shield from gules to vert, in allusion to Greenlaw, their ancient possession. The slogan, or war-cry, of this powerful family, was, "A Home! a Home!"

The Hepburns, a powerful family in East Lothian were usually in close alliance with the Homes. The chief of this clan was Hepburn, Lord of Hailes; a family which terminated in the too famous Earl of Bothwell.

NOTE 38, page 79.

*'Twixt truce and war, such sudden change
Was not infrequent, nor held strange,
In the old Border-day.*

Notwithstanding the constant wars upon the Borders, and the occasional cruelties which marked the mutual inroads, the inhabitants on either side do not appear to have regarded each other with that violent and personal animosity which might have been expected. On the contrary, like the outposts of hostile armies, they often carried on something resembling friendly intercourse, even in the middle of hostilities; and it is evident, from various ordinances against trade and intermarriages, between English and Scottish Borderers, that the governments of both countries, were jealous of their cherishing too intimate a connexion.

NOTE 39, page 86

*Cheer the dark blood-hound on his way,
And with the bugle rouse the fray!*

The pursuit of Border marauders was followed by the injured party and

his friends with blood-hounds and bugle-horn, and was called the *hot-trod*. He was entitled, if his dog could trace the scent, to follow the invaders into the opposite kingdom; a privilege which often occasioned bloodshed. The breed of the blood-hound was kept up by the Buccleuch family on their Border estates till within the 18th century.

NOTE 40, page 89.

She wrought not by forbidden spell.

Popular belief, though contrary to the doctrines of the Church, made a favourable distinction betwixt magicians, and necromancers or wizards;—the former were supposed to command the evil spirits, and the latter to serve, or at least to be in league and compact with, those enemies of mankind. The arts of subjecting the demons were manifold; sometimes the fiends were actually swindled by the magicians.

NOTE 41, page 89.

A merlin sat upon her wrist.

A merlin, or sparrow-hawk, was actually carried by ladies of rank, as a falcon was, in time of peace, the constant attendant of a knight or baron. Godscroft relates, that when Mary of Lorraine was regent, she pressed the Earl of Angus to admit a royal garrison into his castle of Tantallon. To this he returned no direct answer; but, as if apostrophizing a goss-hawk, which sat on his wrist, and which he was feeding during the Queen's speech, he exclaimed, "The devil's in this greedy gléde, she will never be full."—*Hume's History of the House of Douglas*, 1743, vol. ii. p. 131. Barclay complains of the common and indecent practice of bringing hawks and hounds into churches.

NOTE 42, page 89

*And princely peacock's gilded train,
And o'er the boar-head, garnished brave.*

The peacock, it is well known, was considered, during the times of chivalry, not merely an exquisite delicacy, but a dish of peculiar solemnity. After being roasted, it was again decorated with its plumage, and a sponge, dipped in lighted spirits of wine, was placed in its bill. When it was introduced on days of grand festival, it was the signal for the adventurous knights to take upon them vows to do some deed of chivalry, "before the peacock and the ladies."

The boar's head was also a usual dish of feudal splendour. In Scotland it was sometimes surrounded with little banners, displaying the colours and achievements of the baron at whose board it was served.—*Pinkerton's History*, vol. i. p. 432.

NOTE 43, page 90.

Smote with his gauntlet, stout Hunthill.

The Rutherfords of Hunthill were an ancient race of Border Lairds, whose names occur in history, sometimes as defending the frontier against the English, sometimes as disturbing the peace of their own country. Dickon Draw-the-sword was son to the ancient warrior, called in tradition the Cock of Hunthill, remarkable for leading into battle nine sons, gallant warriors, all sons of the aged champion.

NOTE 44, page 90.

—bit his glove.

To bite the thumb, or the glove, seems not to have been considered, upon the Border, as a gesture of contempt, though so used by Shakspeare, but as a pledge of mortal revenge. It is yet remembered, that a young gentleman of Teviotdale, on the morning after a hard drinking-bout, observed that he had bitten his glove. He instantly demanded of his companion, with whom he had quarrelled? And, learning that he had had words with one of the party, insisted on instant satisfaction, asserting that, though he remembered

nothing of the dispute, yet he was sure he never would have bit his glove unless he had received some unpardonable insult. He fell in the duel which was fought near Selkirk, in 1721.

NOTE 45, page 91.

— old Albert Græme,
The Minstrel of that ancient name.

"John Grahame, second son of Malice, Earl of Monteith, commonly surnamed *John with the Bright Sword*, upon some displeasure risen against him at court, retired with many of his clan and kindred into the English Borders, in the reign of King Henry the Fourth, where they seated themselves, and many of their posterity have continued there ever since. Mr Sandford, speaking of them, says, (which indeed was applicable to most of the Borderers on both sides,) 'They were all stark moss-troopers, and arrant thieves: Both to England and Scotland outlawed; yet sometimes connived at, because they gave intelligence forth of Scotland, and would raise 400 horse at any time upon a raid of the English into Scotland. A saying is recorded of a mother to her son, (which is now become proverbial), *Ride, Rowley, though's i' the pot*: that is, the last piece of beef was in the pot, and therefore it was high time for him to go and fetch more.'—*Introduction to the History of Cumberland.*

NOTE 46, page 92.

Who has not heard of Surrey's fame?

The gallant and unfortunate Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, was unquestionably the most accomplished cavalier of his time; and his sonnets display beauties which would do honour to a more polished age. He was beheaded on Towerhill in 1546; a victim to the mean jealousy of Henry VIII., who could not bear so brilliant a character near his throne.

The song of the supposed bard is founded on an incident said to have happened to the Earl in his travels. Cornelius Agrippa, the celebrated alchemist, showed him, in a looking-glass, the lovely Geraldine to whose service he had devoted his pen and his sword. The vision represented her as indisposed, and reclining upon a couch, reading her lover's verses by the light of a waxen taper.

NOTE 47, page 94.

*Of that Sea-Snake, tremendous curl'd,
Whose monstrous circle girds the world.*

The *Jormungandr*, or Snake of the Ocean, whose folds surround the earth, is one of the wildest fictions of the Edda. It was very nearly caught by the god Thor, who went to fish for it with a hook baited with a bull's head. In the battle betwixt the evil demons and the divinities of Odin, which is to precede the *Ragnaröck*, or Twilight of the Gods, this Snake is to act a conspicuous part.

NOTE 48, page 94.

Of those dread Maids, whose hideous yell.

These were the *Valcyriur*, or Selectors of the Slain, despatched by Odin from Valhalla, to choose those who were to die, and to distribute the contest. They are well known to the English reader, as Gray's Fatal Sisters.

NOTE 49, page 95.

*Of Chiefs, who, guided through the gloom
By the pale death-lights of the tomb,
Ransack'd the graves of warriors old,
Their falcions wrench'd from corpses' hold.*

The northern warriors were usually entombed with their arms, and their other treasures. Thus, Angantyr, before commencing the duel in which he was slain, stipulated, that if he fell, his sword Tyrfing should be buried with

him. His daughter, Hervor, afterwards took it from his tomb. The dialogue which passed betwixt her and Angantyr's spirit on this occasion has been often translated. The whole history may be found in the Hervarar-Saga. Indeed, the ghosts of the northern warriors were not wont tamely to suffer their tombs to be plundered; and hence the mortal heroes had an additional temptation to attempt such adventures; for they held nothing more worthy of their valour than to encounter supernatural beings.—*Bartholinus De causis contemptæ a Danis mortis*, lib. i. cap. 2, 9, 10, 13.

NOTE 50, page 97.

————— *St B. ide of Douglas.*

This was a favourite saint of the house of Douglas, and of the Earl of Angus in particular, as we learn from the following passage:—"The Queen-Regent had proposed to raise a rival noble to the ducal dignity; and discoursing of her purpose with Angus, he answered, 'Why not, madam? we are happy that have such a princess, that can know and will acknowledge men's services, and is willing to recompense it; but, by the might of God,' (this was his oath when he was serious and in anger; at other times, it was by St Bryde of Douglas,) if he be a Duke, I will be a Drake!'—So she desisted from prosecuting of that purpose."—*Godscroft*, vol. ii. p. 131.

NOTES

TO

MARMION.

NOTE 1, page 112.

*As when the Champion of the lake
Enters Morgana's fated house,
Or in the Chapel Perilous,
Despising spells and demon's force,
Holds converse with the unburied corse.*

THE romance of the Morte d'Arthur contains a sort of abridgment of the most celebrated adventures of the Round Table; and, being written in comparatively modern language, gives the general reader an excellent idea of what romances of chivalry actually were. It has also the merit of being written in pure old English; and many of the wild adventures which it contains are told with a simplicity bordering upon the sublime. Several of these are referred to in the text; and I would have illustrated them by more full extracts, but as this curious work is about to be republished, I confine myself to the tale of the Chapel Perilous, and of the quest of Sir Launcelot after the Sangreal.

"Right so Sir Launcelot departed, and when he came to the Chappell Perilous, he alighted downe, and tied his horse to a little gate. And as soon as he was within the churchyard, he saw, on the front of the chappell, many faire rich shields turned upside downe; and many of the shields Sir Launcelot had scene knights have before; with that he saw stand by him thirte great knights, more, by a yard, than any man that ever he had scene, and all thes grinned and ginsed at Sir Launcelot; and when he saw their countenance, hee drede them sore, and so put his shield afore him, and tooke his sword in his hand, ready to doe battaile: and they were all armed in black harnais, ready, with their shields and swords drawn. And when Sir Launcelot would have gone through them, they scattered on every side of him, and gave him the way; and therewith he waxed all bold, and entered into the chappell, and then hee saw no light but a dimme lampe burning, and then was he ware of a corpe covered with a cloath of silke; then Sir Launcelot stooped downe, and cut a piece of that cloath away, and then it fared under him as the earth had quaked a little, whereof he was afeard, and then hee saw a faire sword lye by the dead knight, and that he gat in his hand, and hid him out of the chappell. As soon as he was in the chappell-yerd, all the knights spoke to him with a grimly voice, and said, 'Knight, Sir Launcelot, lay that sword from thee, or else thou shalt die.'—'Whether I live or die,' said Sir Launcelot, 'with no great words get yee it againe, therfor fight for it an yee list.' Therewith he passed through them; and, beyond the chappell-yerd, there met him a faire damosell, and said, 'Sir Launcelot, leave that sword behind thee, or thou wilt die for it.'—'I will not leave it,' said Sir Launcelot, 'for no threats.'—'No?' said she; 'and ye did leave that sword, Queen Guenever should ye never see.'—'Then were I a fool and I would leave this sword,' said Sir Launcelot.—'Now, gentle knight,' said the damosell, 'I require thee to kisse me once.'—'Nay,' said Sir Launcelot, 'that God forbid!'—'Well, sir,' said she, 'and thou haddest kised me thy life dayes had been done; but now, alas!' said she, 'I have lost all my labour; for I ordeined this chappell for thy sake, and for Sir Gawaine: and once I had Sir Gawaine within it; and at that time he fought with that knight which there lieth dead in yonder chappell, Sir Gilbert the bastard, and at that time hee smote off Sir Gilbert the bastards left hand. And so, Sir Launcelot, now I tell thee, that I have loved thee this seven years; but there may no woman have thy love but Queene Guenever; but sithen I may not rejoyce thee to have thy body alive, I had kept no more toy in this world but to have had thy dead body; and I would have bairned it and served, and so have kept it in my life daies, and daily I should have clipped thee, and kised thee, in the despite of Queene Guenever.'—'Yee say well,' said Sir Launcelot; 'Jesus preserve me from your subtil craft. And therewith he took his horse, and departed from her."

NOTE 2, page 112.

*A sinful man, and unconfess'd,
He took the Sangreal's holy quest,
And, slumbering, saw the vision high,
He might not view with waking eye.*

One day when Arthur was holding a high feast with his Knights of the Round Table, the Sangreal, or vessel out of which the last passover was

eaten, (a precious relic, which had long remained concealed from human eyes, because of the sins of the land,) suddenly appeared to him and all his chivalry. The consequence of this vision was, that all the knights took on them a solemn vow to seek the Sangreal. But, alas! it could only be revealed to a knight at once accomplished in earthly chivalry, and pure and guiltless of evil conversation. All Sir Launcelot's noble accomplishments were therefore rendered vain by his guilty intrigue with Queen Guenever, or Ganore; and in his holy quest he encountered only such disgraceful disasters as that which follows:—

"But Sir Launcelot rode overthwart and endlong in a wild forest, and held no path but as wild adventure led him; and at the last, he came into a stone crosse, which departed two wayes, in west and; and, by the crosse, was a stone that was of marble; but it was so dark that Sir Launcelot might not well know what it was. Then Sir Launcelot looked by him, and saw an old chappell, and there he wend to have found people. And so Sir Launcelot tied his horse to a tree, and there he put off his shield, and hung it upon a tree, and then hee went unto the chappell doore, and found it wasted and broken. And within he found a faire altar, full richly arrayed with cloth of silk, and there stood a faire candlestick, which beare six great candles, and the candlesticks was of silver. And when Sir Launcelot saw this light, hee had a great will to enter into the chappell, but he could find no place where hee might enter. Then was he passing heavie and dismayed. Then he returned, and came againe to his horse, and took off his saddle and his bridle, and let him pasture, and unlaced his helme, and ungirded his sword, and laid him downe to sleepe upon his shield, before the crosse.

"And so he fell on sleepe; and, halfe waking and halfe sleeping, he saw come by him two palfeys, both faire and white, the which beare a litter, therein lying a sicke knight. And when he was nigh the crosse, he there abode still. All this Sir Launcelot saw and beheld, for hee slept not verily, and he heard him say, 'O sweete Lord, when shall this sorrow leave me, and when shall the holy vessel come by me, where through I shall be blessed, for I have endured thus long for little trespass!' And thus a great while complained the knight, and alwaies Sir Launcelot heard it. With that Sir Launcelot saw the candlestick, with the fire tapers come before the crosse; but he could see nobody that brought it. Also there came a table of silver, and the holy vessel of the Sangreal, the which Sir Launcelot had seen before that time in King Petchour's house. And therewithall the sicke knight set him upright, and held up both his hands, and said, 'Faire sweete Lord, which is here within the holy vessel, take heede to mee, that I may bee hole of this great malady!' And therewith upon his hands, and upon his knees, he went so nigh, that he touched the holy vessel, and kissed it: And anon he was hole, and then he said, 'Lord God, I thank thee, for I am healed of this malady.' So when the holy vessel had been there a great while, it went into the chappelle againe, with the candlesticks and the light, so that Sir Launcelot wist not where it became, for he was overtaken with sinne, that hee had no power to arise against the holy vessel, wherefore afterward many men said of him shame. But he tooke repentance afterward. Then the sicke knight dressed him upright, and kissed the crosse. Then anon his squire brought him his armes, and asked his lord how he did. 'Certainly,' said hee, 'I thank God right heartily for through the holy vessel I am healed.' But I have right great mercvaile of this sleeping knight, which hath had neither grace nor power to awake during the time that this holy vessel hath bene here present.'—'I dare it right well say,' said the squire, 'that this same knight is defouled with some manner of deadly sinne, whereof he has never confessed.'—'By my faith,' said the knight, 'whatsoever he be, he is unhappy; for, as I decree, he is of the fellowship of the Round Table, the which is entered into the quest of the Sangreal.'—'Sir,' said the squire, 'here I have brought you all your armes, save your helme and your sword; and, therefore, by mine assent, now may ye take this knight's helme and his sword;' and so he did. And when he was cleane armed, he took Sir Launcelot's horse, for he was better than his owne, and so they departed from the crosse.

"Then anon Sir Launcelot awaked, and set himselfe upright, and he thought him what hee had there seen, and whether it were dreames or not: right so he heard a voice that said, 'Sir Launcelot, more hardy than is the stone, and more bitter than is the wood, and more naked and bare than is the life of the fig-tree, therefore go thou from hence, and withdraw thee from this holy place;' and when Sir Launcelot heard this, he was passing heavy, and wist not what to doe. And so he departed sore weeping, and cursed the time that he was borne: for then he deemed never to have had more worship; for the words went unto his heart, till that he knew wherefore that hee was so called."

NOTE 3, page 112.

*And Dryden, in immortal strain,
Had raised the Table Round again.*

Dryden's melancholy account of his projected Epic Poem, blasted by the selfish and sordid parsimony of his patrons, is contained in an "Essay on Satire," addressed to the Earl of Dorset, and prefixed to the Translation of Juvenal. After mentioning a plan of supplying machinery from the guardian angels of kingdoms, mentioned in the Book of Daniel, he adds—

"Thus, my lord, I have, as briefly as I could, given your lordship, and by you the world, a rude draught of what I have been long labouring in my imagination, and what I had intended to have put in practice (though far unable for the attempt of such a poem); and to have left the stage, to which my genius never much inclined me, for a work which would have taken up my life in the performance of it. This, too, I had intended chiefly for the honour of my native country, to which a poet is particularly obliged. Of two subjects, both relating to it, I was doubtful whether I should choose that of King Arthur conquering the Saxons, which, being farther distant in time, gives the greater scope to my invention; or that of Edward the Black Prince, in subduing Spain, and restoring it to the lawful prince, though a great tyrant, Don Pedro the Cruel; which, for the compass of time, including only the expedition of one year, for the greatness of the action, and its answerable event, for the

magnanimity of the English hero, opposed to the ingratitude of the person whom he restored, and for the many beautiful episodes which I had interwoven with the principal design, together with the characters of the chiefest English persons, (wherein, after Virgil and Spenser, I would have taken occasion to represent my living friends and patrons of the noblest families, and also shadowed the events of future ages in the succession of our imperial line),—with these helps, and those of the machines which I have mentioned, I might perhaps have done, as well as some of my predecessors, or at least chalked out a way for others to amend my errors in a like design; but being encouraged only with fair words by King Charles II., my little salary ill paid, and no prospect of a future subsistence, I was then discouraged in the beginning of my attempt; and now age has overtaken me, and want, a more insufferable evil, through the change of the times, has wholly disabled me."

NOTE 4, page 118.

*Their theme the merry minstrels made,
Of Ascapart, and Bevis bold.*

The "History of Bevis of Hampton" is abridged by my friend Mr. George Ellis, with that liveliness which extracts amusement even out of the most rude and unpromising of our old tales of chivalry. Ascapart, a most important personage in the romance, is thus described in an extract:—

"This giant was mighty and strong,
And full thirty foot was long.
He was bristled like a sow;
A foot he had between each brow;
His lips were great, and hung aside;
His eyes were hollow, his mouth was wide;
Lothly he was to look on than,
And liker a devil than a man.
His staff was a young oak,
Hard and heavy was his stroke."
Specimens of Metrical Romances, vol. ii. p. 126.

I am happy to say, that the memory of Sir Bevis is still fragrant in his town of Southampton; the gate of which is sentinelled by the effigies of that doughty knight-errant and his gigantic associate.

NOTE 5, page 114.

*Day set on Norham's castled steep,
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep, &c.*

The ruinous castle of Norham (anciently called Ubbanfurd) is situated on the southern bank of the Tweed, about six miles above Berwick, and where that river is still the boundary between England and Scotland. The extent of its ruins, as well as its historical importance, shows it to have been a place of magnificence, as well as strength. Edward I. resided there when he was created umpire of the dispute concerning the Scottish succession. It was repeatedly taken and retaken during the wars between England and Scotland; and, indeed, scarce any happened, in which it had not a principal share. Norham Castle is situated on a steep bank, which overhangs the river. The repeated sieges which the castle had sustained, rendered frequent repairs necessary. In 1164, it was almost rebuilt by Hugh Pudsey, Bishop of Durham, who added a huge keep, or donjon; notwithstanding which, King Henry II., in 1174, took the castle from the bishop, and committed the keeping of it to William de Neville. After this period it seems to have been chiefly garrisoned by the King, and considered as a royal fortress. The Greys of Chillingham Castle were frequently the castellans, or captains of the garrison: Yet, as the castle was situated in the patrimony of St Outhbert, the property was in the see of Durham till the Reformation. After that period it passed through various hands. At the union of the crowns, it was in the possession of Sir Robert Carey (afterwards Earl of Monmouth) for his own life, and that of two of his sons. After King James's accession, Carey sold Norham Castle to George Home, Earl of Dunbar, for £8000. See his curious *Memoirs*, published by Mr Constable of Edinburgh.

According to Mr Pinkerton, there is in the British Museum, Cal. B. 6. 216, a curious memoir of the Dacres on the state of Norham Castle in 1522, not long after the battle of Flodden. The inner ward, or keep, is represented as impregnable:—"The provisions are three great vats of salt eels forty-four kine, three hogshheads of salted salmon, forty quarters of grain, besides many cows and four hundred sheep, lying under the castle-wall

nightly; but a number of the arrows wanted feathers, and a good *Fletcher* [*i. e.* maker of arrows] was required."—*History of Scotland*, vol. ii. p. 201, note.

The ruins of the castle are at present considerable, as well as picturesque. They consist of a large shattered tower, with many vaults, and fragments of other edifices, enclosed within an outward wall of great circuit.

NOTE 6, page 114.

The battled towers, the donjon keep.

It is perhaps unnecessary to remind my readers, that the *donjon*, in its proper signification, means the strongest part of a feudal castle; a high square tower, with walls of tremendous thickness, situated in the centre of the other buildings, from which, however, it was usually detached. Here, in case of the outward defences being gained, the garrison retreated to make their last stand. The donjon contained the great hall, and principal rooms of state for solemn occasions, and also the prison of the fortress; from which last circumstance we derive the modern and restricted use of the word *donjon*. Ducange (*voce* DUNJO) conjectures plausibly, that the name is derived from these keeps being usually built upon a hill, which in Celtic is called DUN. Borlase supposes the word came from the darkness of the apartments in these towers, which were thence figuratively called DUN-geons; thus deriving the ancient word from the modern application of it.

NOTE 7, page 115.

*Well was he arm'd from head to hee',
In mail and plate of Milan steel.*

The artists of Milan were famous in the middle ages for their skill in armoury, as appears from the following passage, in which Froissart gives an account of the preparations made by Henry, Earl of Hereford, afterwards Henry IV., and Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marischal, for their proposed combat in the lists at Coventry:—"These two lords made ample provision of all things necessary for the combat; and the Earl of Derby sent off messengers to Lombardy, to have armour from Sir Galeas, Duke of Milan. The Duke complied with joy, and gave the knight, called Sir Francis, who had brought the message, the choice of all his armour for the Earl of Derby. When he had selected what he wished for in plated and mail armour, the Lord of Milan, out of his abundant love for the Earl, ordered four of the best armourers in Milan to accompany the knight to England, that the Earl of Derby might be more completely armed."—*JOHNES' Froissart*, vol. iv. p. 597.

NOTE 8, page 116.

Who checks at me, to death is right.

The crest and motto of Marmion are borrowed from the following story:—Sir David de Lindsay, first Earl of Crauford, was, among other gentlemen of quality, attended, during a visit to London in 1390, by Sir William Dalzell, who was, according to my authority, Bower, not only excelling in wisdom, but also of a lively wit. Chancing to be at the court, he there saw Sir Piers Courtenay, an English knight, famous for skill in tilting, and for the beauty of his person, parading the palace, arrayed in a new mantle, bearing for device an embroidered falcon, with this rhyme,—

"I bear a falcon, fairest of flight,
Whoso pinches at her, his death is right!
In graith." 2

The Scottish knight, being a wag, appeared next day in a dress exactly similar to that of Courtenay, but bearing a magpie instead of the falcon, with a motto ingeniously contrived to rhyme to the vaunting inscription of Sir Piers:—

"I bear a pie picking at a piece,
Whoso picks at her, I shall pick at his nose, 3
In faith."

1 Prepared.

2 Armour.

3 Nose.

This affront could only be expiated by a just with sharp lances. In the course, Dalzell left his helmet unlaced, so that it gave way at the touch of his antagonist's lance, and he thus avoided the shock of the encounter. This happened twice: in the third encounter, the handsome Courtenay lost two of his front teeth. As the Englishman complained bitterly of Dalzell's fraud in not fastening his helmet, the Scottishman agreed to run six courses more, each champion staking in the hand of the king two hundred pounds, to be forfeited if, on entering the lists, any unequal advantage should be detected. This being agreed to, the wily Scot demanded that Sir Piers, in addition to the loss of his teeth, should consent to the extinction of one of his eyes, he himself having lost an eye in the fight of Otterburn. As Courtenay demurred to this equalization of optical powers, Dalzell demanded the forfeit, which, after much altercation, the king appointed to be paid to him, saying, he surpassed the English both in wit and valour. This must appear to the reader a singular specimen of the humour of that time. I suspect the Jockey Club would have given a different decision from Henry IV.

NOTE 9, page 117.

*They hail'd Lord Marmion:
They hail'd him Lord of Fontenaye,
Of Luttreward, and Scrivelbaye,
Of Tamworth tower and town.*

Lord Marmion, the principal character of the present romance, is entirely a fictitious personage. In earlier times, indeed, the family of Marmion, Lords of Fontenay in Normandy, was highly distinguished. Robert de Marmion, Lord of Fontenay, a distinguished follower of the Conqueror, obtained a grant of the castle and town of Tamworth, and also of the manor of Scrivelby, in Lincolnshire. One, or both, of these noble possessions, was held by the honourable service of being the Royal Champion, as the ancestors of Marmion had formerly been to the Dukes of Normandy. But after the castle and demesne of Tamworth had passed through four successive barons from Robert, the family became extinct in the person of Philip de Marmion, who died in 20th Edward I. without issue male. He was succeeded in his castle of Tamworth by Alexander de Freville, who married Mazera, his granddaughter. Baldwin de Freville, Alexander's descendant, in the reign of Richard I., by the supposed tenure of his castle of Tamworth, claimed the office of Royal Champion, and to do the service appertaining; namely, on the day of coronation, to ride, completely armed, upon a barbed horse, into Westminster Hall, and there to challenge the combat against any who would gainsay the king's title. But this office was adjudged to Sir John Dymoke, to whom the manor of Scrivelby had descended by another of the co-heiresses of Robert de Marmion; and it remains in that family, whose representative is Hereditary Champion of England at the present day. The family and possessions of Freville have merged in the Earls of Ferrars. I have not, therefore, created a new family, but only revived the titles of an old one in an imaginary personage.

It was one of the Marmion family, who, in the reign of Edward II., performed that chivalrous feat before the very castle of Norham, which Bishop Percy has woven into his beautiful ballad, "The Hermit of Warkworth." The story is thus told by Leland:—

"The Scottes cam yn to the marches of England, and destroyed the castles of Werk and Herbolch, and overran much of Northumberland marches.

"At this tyme, Thomas Gray and his friendes defended Norham from the Scottes. It were a wonderful processe to declare, what mischeifes cam by hungrre and assages by the space of xi yeres in Northumberland: for the Scottes became so proude, after they had got Berwick, that they nothing esteemed the Englishmen.

"About this tyme there was a greate feste made yn Lincolnshir, to which came many gentlemen and ladies: and amonge them one lady brought a heulme for a man of weire, with a very riche creste of gold, to William Marmion, knight, with a letter of commendement of her lady, that he should go into the daungerest place in England, and ther to let the heulme be scene and known as famous. So he went to Norham; whither, within 4 dayes of cumming, cam Philip Moulbray, guardian of Berwicke, having yn his bande 40 men of armes: the very flour of men of the Scottish marches.

"Thomas Gray, capitayne of Norham, seynge this, brought his garison afore the barriers of the castel, behind whom cam William, richly arrayed, as al glittering in gold, and wearing the heulme, his lady's present.

"Then said Thomas Gray to Marmion, 'Sir Knight, be ye cum hither to fame your helmetis

mount up on your horse, and ryde lyke a valiant man to your foes even here at hand, and I forsake God if I rescue not thy body deade or alyve, or I myself wyl dye for it.

"Whereupon he toke his caverse, and rode among the throng of ennuyes; the which layed sore stripes on him, and pulled him at the last out of his sadel to the grounde.

"Then Thomas Gray, with al the hole garrison, lette prick yn among the Scottes, and so woudit them and their horses, that they were overthrowan; and Marmion, sore beten, was horsid agayn, and, with Gray, persewed the Scottes yn chase. There were taken 50 horse of price; and the women of Norham brought them to the foote men to follow the chase."

NOTE 10, page 118.

*Sir Hugh the Heron bo'd,
Baron of Twisell, and of Ford,
And Captain of the Hold.*

Were accuracy of any consequence in a fictitious narrative, this castellan's name ought to have been William; for William Heron of Ford was husband to the famous Lady Ford, whose siren charms are said to have cost our James IV. so dear. Moreover, the said William Heron was, at the time supposed, a prisoner in Scotland, being surrendered by Henry VIII. on account of his share in the slaughter of Sir Robert Ker of Cessford. His wife, represented in the text as residing at the Court of Scotland, was, in fact, living in her own castle at Ford.—See Sir RICHARD HERON'S curious *Genealogy of the Heron Family*.

NOTE 11, page 120.

*James back'd the cause of that mock prince,
Warbeck, that Flemish counterfeit,
Who on the gibbet paid the cheat.
Then did I march with Surrey's power,
What time we razed old Aylton Tower.*

The story of Perkin Warbeck, or Richard, Duke of York, is well known. In 1496, he was received honourably in Scotland; and James IV., after conferring upon him in marriage his own relation, the Lady Catherine Gordon, made war on England in behalf of his pretensions. To retaliate an invasion of England, Surrey advanced into Berwickshire at the head of considerable forces, but retreated, after taking the inconsiderable fortress of Ayton.

NOTE 12, page 120.

*— here be some have prick'd as fur,
On Scottish ground, as to Dumbar;
Have drunk the monks of St Bothan's ale,
And driven the bees of Lauderdale;
Harried the wives of Greenlaw's goods,
And given them light to set their hoods.*

The garrisons of the English castles of Wark, Norham, and Berwick, were, as may be easily supposed, very troublesome neighbours to Scotland. Sir Richard Maitland of Ledington wrote a poem, called "The Blind Baron's Comfort," when his barony of Blythe, in Lauderdale, was *harried* by Rowland Foster, the English captain of Wark, with his company, to the number of 300 men. They spoiled the poetical knight of 5000 sheep, 200 nolt, 30 horses and mares; the whole furniture of his house of Blythe, worth 100 pounds Scots (£8:6:8), and everything else that was portable.

NOTE 13, page 121.

*The priest of Shoreswood—he could rein
The wildest war-horse in your train.*

This churchman seems to have been akin to Welsh, the vicar of St Thomas of Exeter, a leader among the Cornish insurgents in 1549. "This man," says Holinshed, "had many good things in him. He was of no great stature, but well set, and mightilie compact: He was a very good wrestler; shot well, both in the long bow and also in the cross-bow; he handled his hand-gun and peece very well; he was a very good woodman, and a hardie, and such a one as would not give his head for the polling, or his beard for

the washing." This model of clerical talents had the misfortune to be hanged upon the steeple of his own church.

NOTE 14, page 122.

— *that Grot where Olives nod,
Where, darling of each heart and eye,
From all the south of Sicily,
Saint Rosalie retired to God.*

"Sante Rosalia was of Palermo, and born of a very noble family, and when very young, abhorred so much the vanities of this world, and avoided the converse of mankind, resolving to dedicate herself wholly to God Almighty, that she, by divine inspiration, forsook her father's house, and never was more heard of till her body was found in that cleft of a rock, on that almost inaccessible mountain, where now the chapel is built; and they affirm she was carried up there by the hands of angels; for that place was not formerly so accessible (as now it is) in the days of the Saint; and even now it is a very bad, and steepy, and breakneck way. In this frightful place, this holy woman lived a great many years, feeding only on what she found growing on that barren mountain, and creeping into a narrow and dreadful cleft in a rock, which was always dropping wet, and was her place of retirement as well as prayer; having worn out even the rock with her knees in a certain place, which is now open'd on purpose to show it to those who come here."—*Poeyage to Sicily and Malta*, by Mr John Dryden, (son to the poet), p. 107.

NOTE 15, page 123.

*Friar John —————
Himself still sleeps before his beads
Have mark'd ten axes and two creeds.*

Friar John understood the soporific virtue of his beads and breviary, as well as his namesake in Rabelais. "But Gargantua could not sleep by any means, on which side soever he turned himself. Whereupon the monk said to him, 'I never sleep soundly but when I am at sermon or prayers: Let us therefore begin, you and I, the seven penitential psalms, to try whether you shall not quickly fall asleep.' The conceit pleased Gargantua very well; and beginning the first of these psalms, as soon as they came to *Beati quorum*, they fell asleep, both the one and the other."

NOTE 16, page 123.

The summon'd Palmer came in place

A *Palmer*, opposed to a *Pilgrim*, was one who made it his sole business to visit different holy shrines; travelling incessantly, and subsisting by charity: whereas the *Pilgrim* retired to his usual home and occupations, when he had paid his devotions at the particular spot which was the object of his pilgrimage. The *Palmer*s seem to have been the *Questionarii* of the ancient Scottish canons 1242 and 1296.

NOTE 17, page 124.

*To fair St Andrews bound,
Within the ocean-cave to pray,
Where good Saint Rule his holy lay,
From midnight to the dawn of day,
Sung to the billows' sound.*

St Regulus (*Scottick*, St Rule), a monk of Patre, in Achaia, warned by a vision, is said, A. D. 370, to have sailed westward, until he landed at St Andrews, in Scotland, where he founded a chapel and tower. The latter is still standing; and, though we may doubt the precise date of its foundation, is certainly one of the most ancient edifices in Scotland. A cave, nearly fronting the ruinous castle of the Archbishops of St Andrews, bears the name of this religious person. It is difficult of access; and the rock in which it is hewed is washed by the German Ocean. It is nearly round, about ten feet in diameter, and the same in height. On one side is a sort of stone altar; on the other, an aperture into an inner den, where the miserable ascetic, who inhabited this dwelling, probably slept. At full tide, egress and regress are hardly practicable. As Regulus first colonized the metropolitan see of Scotland, and converted the inhabitants in the vicinity, he has some reason to complain, that the ancient name of Killrule (*Cella*

Reguli) should have been superseded, even in favour of the tutelar saint of Scotland. The reason of the change was, that St Rule is said to have brought to Scotland the relics of Saint Andrew.

NOTE 18, page 121.

— *Saint Fillan's blessed well,
Whose spring can frenzied dreams dispel,
And the crazed brain restore.*

St Fillan was a Scottish saint of some reputation. Although Popery is, with us, matter of abomination, yet the common people still retain some of the superstitions connected with it. There are in Perthshire several wells and springs dedicated to St Fillan, which are still places of pilgrimage and offerings, even among the Protestants. They are held powerful in cases of madness; and, in some of very late occurrence, lunatics have been left all night bound to the holy stone, in confidence that the saint would cure and unloose them before morning.

NOTE 19, page 126.

*The scenes are desert now, and bare,
Where flourish'd once a forest fair.*

Ettrick Forest, now a range of mountainous sheep-walks, was anciently reserved for the pleasure of the royal chase. Since it was disparked, the wood has been, by degrees, almost totally destroyed, although, wherever protected from the sheep, copses soon arise without any planting. When the King hunted there, he often summoned the array of the country to meet and assist his sport. Thus, in 1528, James V. "made proclamation to all lords, barons, gentlemen, landward-men, and freeholders, that they should compear at Edinburgh, with a month's victuals, to pass with the King where he pleased, to danton the thieves of Tiviotdale, Annandale, Liddisdale, and other parts of that country; and also warned all gentlemen that had good dogs to bring them, that he might hunt in the said country as he pleased: The whilk the Earl of Argyle, the Earl of Huntley, the Earl of Athole, and so all the rest of the gentlemen of the Highland, did, and brought their hounds with them in like manner, to hunt with the King as he pleased.

"The second day of June the King past out of Edinburgh to the hunting, with many of the nobles and gentlemen of Scotland with him, to the number of twelve thousand men; and then past to Meggitland, and hounded and hawked all the country and bounds; that is to say, Crammat, Pappertlaw, St Mary-laws, Carlavrick, Chapel, Ewindoores, and Longhope. I heard say, he slew, in these bounds, eighteen score of harts." 1

These huntings had, of course, a military character, and attendance upon them was a part of the duty of a vassal. The act for abolishing ward or military tenures in Scotland, enumerates the services of hunting, hosting, watching, and warding, as those which were in future to be illegal.

Taylor, the water-poet, has given an account of the mode in which these huntings were conducted in the Highlands of Scotland, in the seventeenth century, having been present at Braemar upon such an occasion:—

"There did I find the truly noble and right honourable lords, John Erskine, Earl of Mar; James Stewart, Earl of Murray; George Gordon, Earl of Engre, son and heir to the Marquis of Huntley; James Erskine, Earl of Buchan; and John, Lord Erskine, son and heir to the Earl of Mar, and their Countesses, with my much honoured, and my last assured and approved friend, Sir William Murray, knight of Abercromby, and hundreds of others, knights, esquires, and their followers; all and every man, in general, in one habit, as if Lycurgus had been there, and made laws of equality; for once in the year, which is the whole month of August, and sometimes part of September, many of the nobility and gentry of the kingdom (for their pleasure) do come into these Highland countries to hunt; where they do conform themselves to the habit of the Highlandmen, who, for the most part, speak nothing but Irish; and, in former time, were those people which were called the *Red-shanks*. Their habit is—shoes, with but one sole a-piece; stockings (which they call short-hose), made of a warm stuff of diverse colours, which they call tartan; as for breeches, many of them, nor their fore-shirts, never wore any, but a jerkin of the same stuff that their hose is of; their garters being bands or wreaths of hay or straw; with a plaid about their shoulders; which is a mantle of diverse colours, much finer and lighter stuff than their hose; with blue flat caps on their heads; a handkerchief, knit with two knots, about their necks; and thus are they attired. Now their weapons are—long bowes and forked arrows, swords and targets, harque-

1 *Pitcott's History of Scotland*, folio edition, p. 123.

pusses, muskets, durks, and Lochaber axes. With these arms I found many of them armed for the hunting. As for the attire, any man of what degree soever, that comes amongst them, must not disdain to wear it; for, if they do, then they will disdain to hunt, or willingly to bring in their dogs; but if men be kind unto them, and be in their habit, then are they conquered with kindness, and the sport will be plentiful. This was the reason that I found so many noblemen and gentlemen in those shapes. But to proceed to the hunting:—

"My good Lord of Marr having put me into that shape, I rode with him from his house, where I saw the ruins of an old castle, called the Castle of Kindrochit. It was built by King Malcolm Canmore (for a hunting-house), who reigned in Scotland, when Edward the Confessor, Harold, and Norman William, reigned in England. I speak of it, because it was the last house I saw in those parts; for I was the space of twelve days after, before I saw either house, corn-field, or habitation for any creature, but deer, wild horses, wolves, and such like creatures,—which made me doubt that I should never have seen a house again.

"Thus, the first day, we travelled eight miles, where there were small cottages, built on purpose to lodge in, which they call *Longquhards*. I thank my good Lord Erskine, he commanded that I should always be lodged in his lodging; the kitchen being always on the side of a bank; many kettles and pots boiling, and many spits turning and winding, with great variety of cheer,—as venison baked; sodden, roast, and stewed beef; mutton, goats, kid, hares, fresh salmon, pigeons, hens, capons, chickens, partridges, muir-coots, heath-cocks, caper-kelies, and ternaigants; good ale, sacke, white and claret, tent (or elegant), with most potent aquavite.

"All these, and more than these, we had continually in superfluous abundance, caught by falconers, fowlers, fishers, and brought by my lord's tenants and purveyors to victual our camp, which consisteth of fourteen or fifteen hundred men and horses. The manner of the hunting is this: Five or six hundred men do rise early in the morning, and they do disperse themselves divers ways, and seven, eight, or ten miles compass, they do bring, or chase in, the deer in many herds (two, three, or four hundred in a herd) to such or such a place, as the noblemen shall appoint them; then, when day is come, the lords and gentlemen of their companies do ride or go to the said places, sometimes wading up to the middles, through burns and rivers; and then, they being come to the place, do lie down on the ground, till those foresaid scouts, which are called the *Tinkhell*, do bring down the deer; but, as the proverb says of the bad cook, so these tinkhell men do lick their own fingers; for, besides their bows and arrows, which they carry with them, we can hear, now and then, a *harquebuss* or a musket go off, which they do seldom discharge in vain. Then, after we had said there three hours, or thereabouts, we might perceive the deer appear on the hills round about us (their heads making a show like a wood), which, being followed close by the tinkhell, are chased down into the valley where we lay; then all the valley, on each side, being way-laid with a hundred couple of strong Irish greyhounds, they are all let loose as occasion serves, upon the herd of deer, that with dogs, guns, arrows, durks, and daggers, in the space of two hours, fourscore fat deer were slain; which after are disposed of, some one way, and some another, twenty and thirty miles, and more than enough left for us, to make merry withal, at our rendezvous."

NOTE 20, page 129.

By lone Saint Mary's silent lake.

This beautiful sheet of water forms the reservoir from which the Yarrow takes its source. It is connected with a smaller lake, called the Loch of the Lowes, and surrounded by mountains. In the winter, it is still frequented by flights of wild swans; hence my friend Mr Wordsworth's lines—

"The swan on sweet St. Mary's lake
Floats double, swan and shadow."

Near the lower extremity of the lake are the ruins of Dryhope Tower, the birth-place of Mary Scott, daughter of Philip Scott of Dryhope, and famous by the traditional name of the Flower of Yarrow. She was married to Walter Scott of Harden, no less renowned for his depredations, than his bride for her beauty. Her romantic appellation was, in latter days, with equal justice, conferred on Miss Mary Lillias Scott, the last of the elder branch of the Harden family. The author well remembers the talent and spirit of the latter Flower of Yarrow, though age had then injured the charms which procured her the name. The words usually sung to the air of "Tweedside," beginning, "What beauties does Flora disclose," were composed in her honour.

NOTE 21, page 129.

— in feudal strife, a foe,
Hath laid Our Lady's chapel low.

The chapel of St Mary of the Lowes (*de lacubus*) was situated on the eastern side of the lake, to which it gives name. It was injured by the clan of Scott, in a feud with the Cranstouns, but continued to be a place of worship during the seventeenth century. The vestiges of the building can now scarcely be traced; but the burial-ground is still used as a cemetery. A funeral, in a spot so very retired, has an uncommonly striking effect. The vestiges of the chaplain's house are yet visible. Being in a high situation, it commanded a full view of the lake, with the opposite mountain of Bourhope, belonging, with the lake itself, to Lord Napier. On the left hand is the Tower of Dryhope, mentioned in a preceding note.

NOTE 22, page 130.

— *the Wizard's grave ;
That Wizard Priest's, whose bones are thrust
From company of holy dust.*

At one corner of the burial-ground of the demolished chapel, but without its precincts, is a small mound, called *Binram's Corse*, where tradition deposits the remains of a necromantic priest, the former tenant of the chaplainry.

NOTE 23, page 130.

*Some ruder and more savage scene,
Like that which frowns round dark Loch-skene.*

Loch-skene is a mountain lake, of considerable size, at the head of the Moffat-water. The character of the scenery is uncommonly savage; and the earn, or Scottish eagle, has, for many ages, built its nest yearly upon an islet in the lake. Loch-skene discharges itself into a brook, which, after a short and precipitate course, falls from a cataract of immense height, and gloomy grandeur, called, from its appearance, the "Grey Mare's Tail." The "Giant's Grave," afterwards mentioned, is a sort of trench, which bears that name, a little way from the foot of the cataract. It has the appearance of a battery, designed to command the pass.

NOTE 24, page 131.

— *St Cuthbert's Holy Isle.*

Lindisfarne, an isle on the coast of Northumberland, was called Holy Island, from the sanctity of its ancient monastery, and from its having been the Episcopal seat of the See of Durham during the early ages of British Christianity. A succession of holy men held that office: but their merits were swallowed up in the superior fame of St Cuthbert, who was sixth Bishop of Durham, and who bestowed the name of his "patrimony" upon the extensive property of the See. The ruins of the monastery upon Holy Island betoken great antiquity. The arches are, in general, strictly Saxon; and the pillars which support them, short, strong, and massy. In some places, however, there are pointed windows, which indicate that the building has been repaired at a period long subsequent to the original foundation. The exterior ornaments of the building, being of a light sandy stone, have been wasted, as described in the text. Lindisfarne is not properly an island, but rather, as the venerable Bede has termed it, a semi-isle; for, although surrounded by the sea at full tide, the ebb leaves the sands dry between it and the opposite coast of Northumberland, from which it is about three miles distant.

NOTE 25, page 136.

— *in their convent-cell
A Saxon princess once did dwell,
The lovely Edelfled.*

She was the daughter of King Oswy, who, in gratitude to Heaven for the great victory which he won in 655, against Penda, the Pagan King of Mercia, dedicated Edelfleda, then but a year old, to the service of God, in the monastery of Whitby, of which St Hilda was then abbess. She afterwards adorned the place of her education with great magnificence.

NOTE 26, page 136.

— *of thousand snakes, each one
Was changed into a coil of stone,
When holy Hilda pray'd;
They told, how sea-fowls' pinions fail,
As over Whitby's towers they sail.*

These two miracles are much insisted upon by all ancient writers who have occasion to mention either Whitby or St Hilda. The relics of the snakes which infested the precincts of the convent, and were, at the abbess's

prayer, not only beheaded, but petrified, are still found about the rocks, and are termed by Protestant fossilists, *Ammonite*.

The other miracle is thus mentioned by Camden: "It is also ascribed to the power of her sanctity, that these wild geese, which, in the winter, fly in great flocks to the lakes and rivers unfrozen in the southern parts, to the great amazement of every one, fall down suddenly upon the ground, when they are in their flight over certain neighbouring fields hereabouts: a relation I should not have made, if I had not received it from several credible men. But those who are less inclined to heed superstition, attribute it to some occult quality in the ground, and to somewhat of antipathy between it and the geese, such as they say is betwixt wolves and scyllaroots: For that such hidden tendencies and aversions, as we call sympathies and antipathies, are implanted in many things by provident Nature for the preservation of them, is a thing so evident that everybody grants it." Mr Charlton, in his history of Whitby, points out the true origin of the fable, from the number of sea-gulls that, when flying from a storm, often alight near Whitby; and from the woodcocks, and other birds of passage, who do the same upon their arrival on shore, after a long flight.

NOTE 27, page 136.

*His body's resting-place of old,
How oft their patron changed, they told.*

St Cuthbert was, in the choice of his sepulchre, one of the most mutable and unreasonable saints in the Calendar. He died A. D. 688, in a hermitage upon the Farne Islands, having resigned the bishopric of Lindisfarne, or Holy Island, about two years before.¹ His body was brought to Lindisfarne, where it remained until a descent of the Danes, about 793, when the monastery was nearly destroyed. The monks fled to Scotland with what they deemed their chief treasure, the relics of St Cuthbert. The Saint was, however, a most capricious fellow-traveller; which was the more intolerable, as, like Sinbad's Old Man of the Sea, he journeyed upon the shoulders of his companions. They paraded him through Scotland for several years, and came as far west as Whithorn, in Galloway, whence they attempted to sail for Ireland, but were driven back by tempests. He at length made a halt at Norham; from thence he went to Melrose, where he remained stationary for a short time, and then caused himself to be launched upon the Tweed in a stone coffin, which landed him at Tilmouth, in Northumberland.

The resting-place of the remains of this Saint is not now matter of uncertainty. So recently as 17th May 1827, 1139 years after his death, their discovery and disinterment were effected. Under a blue stone, in the middle of the shrine of St Cuthbert, at the eastern extremity of the choir of Durham Cathedral, there was then found a walled grave, containing the coffin of the Saint. The first, or outer one, was ascertained to be that of 1541, the second of 1041; the third, or inner one, answering in every particular to the description of that of 698, was found to contain, not indeed as had been averred then, and even until 1539, the incorruptible body, but the entire skeleton of the Saint; the bottom of the grave being perfectly dry, free from offensive smell, and without the slightest symptom that a human body had ever undergone decomposition within its walls. The skeleton was found swathed in five silk robes of emblematical embroidery, the ornamental parts laid with gold leaf, and these again covered with a robe of linen. Beside the skeleton were also deposited several gold and silver *insignia*, and other relics of the Saint.

NOTE 28, page 137.

*Even Scotland's dauntless king, and heir, &c.
Before his standard fled.*

Every one has heard, that when David I., with his son Henry, invaded Northumberland in 1136, the English host marched against them under the

¹ He resumed the bishopric of Lindisfarne, which, owing to bad health, he again relinquished within less than three months before his death.—*Rain's St Cuthbert*

holy banner of St Cuthbert; to the efficacy of which was imputed the great victory which they obtained in the bloody battle of Northallerton, or Cutton-moor. The conquerors were at least as much indebted to the jealousy and intractability of the different tribes who composed David's army; among whom, as mentioned in the text, were the Galwegians, the Britons of Strath-Clyde, the men of Teviotdale and Lothian, with many Norman and German warriors, who asserted the cause of the Empress Maud. See *Chalmers' Caledonia*, vol. i. p. 622; a most laborious, curious, and interesting publication, from which considerable defects of style and manner ought not to turn aside the Scottish antiquary.

NOTE 29, page 137.

*'Twas he, to vindicate his reign,
Edged Alfred's falchion on the Dane.
And turn'd the Conqueror back again.*

Cuthbert, we have seen, had no great reason to spare the Danes, when opportunity offered. Accordingly, I find, in Simeon of Durham, that the Saint appeared in a vision to Alfred, when lurking in the marshes of Glas-tonbury, and promised him assistance and victory over his heathen enemies; a consolation, which, as was reasonable, Alfred, after the victory of Ashen-down, rewarded by a royal offering at the shrine of the Saint. As to William the Conqueror, the terror spread before his army, when he marched to punish the revolt of the Northumbrians, in 1096, had forced the monks to fly once more to Holy Island with the body of the Saint. It was, however, replaced before William left the north; and, to balance accounts, the Conqueror having intimated an indiscreet curiosity to view the Saint's body, he was, while in the act of commanding the shrine to be opened, seized with heat and sickness, accompanied with such a panic terror, that, notwithstanding there was a sumptuous dinner prepared for him, he fled without eating a morsel (which the monkish historian seems to have thought no small part both of the miracle and the penance), and never drew his bridle till he got to the river Tees.

NOTE 30, page 137.

*Saint Cuthbert sits, and toils to frame
The sea-born beads that bear his name.*

Although we do not learn that Cuthbert was, during his life, such an artificer as Dunstan, his brother in sanctity, yet, since his death, he has acquired the reputation of forging those *Entrochi* which are found among the rocks of Holy Island, and pass there by the name of St Cuthbert's Beads. While at this task, he is supposed to sit during the night upon a certain rock, and use another as his anvil. This story was perhaps credited in former days; at least the Saint's legend contains some not more probable.

NOTE 31, page 137.

Old Colwulf.

Colwulf, or Colwulf, King of Northumberland, flourished in the eighth century. He was a man of some learning; for the venerable Bede dedicated to him his "Ecclesiastical History." He abdicated the throne about 738, and retired to Holy Island, where he died in the odour of sanctity. Saint as Colwulf was, however, I fear the foundation of the penance-vault does not correspond with his character; for it is recorded among his *memorabilia*, that, finding the air of the island raw and cold, he indulged the monks, whose rule had hitherto confined them to milk or water, with the comfortable privilege of using wine or ale. If any rigid antiquary insists on this objection, he is welcome to suppose the penance-vault was intended, by the founder, for the more genial purposes of a cellar.

NOTE 32, page 139.

Tynemouth's haughty Prioress.

That there was an ancient priory at Tynemouth is certain. Its ruins are

situated on a high rocky point; and, doubtless, many a vow was made to the shrine by the distressed mariners who drove towards the iron-bound coast of Northumberland in stormy weather. It was anciently a nunnery; for Virca, abbess of Tynemouth, presented St Cuthbert (yet alive) with a rare winding-sheet, in emulation of a holy lady called Tuda, who had sent him a coffin: But, as in the case of Whitby, and of Holy Island, the introduction of nuns at Tynemouth in the reign of Henry VIII. is an anachronism. The nunnery at Holy Island is altogether fictitious. Indeed, St Cuthbert was unlikely to permit such an establishment; for, notwithstanding his accepting the mortuary gifts above mentioned, and his carrying on a visiting acquaintance with the Abbess of Coldingham, he certainly hated the whole female sex; and, in revenge of a slippery trick played to him by an Irish princess, he, after death, inflicted severe penances on such as presumed to approach within a certain distance of his shrine.

NOTE 33, page 141.

*On those the wall was to enclose,
Alive, within the tomb.*

It is well known that the religious, who broke their vows of chastity, were subjected to the same penalty as the Roman vestals in a similar case. A small niche, sufficient to enclose their bodies, was made in the massive wall of the convent; a slender pittance of food and water was deposited in it; and the awful words, VADE IN PACE, were the signal for immuring the criminal. It is not likely that, in latter times, this punishment was often resorted to; but, among the ruins of the Abbey of Coldingham, were some years ago discovered the remains of a female skeleton, which, from the shape of the niche, and position of the figure, seemed to be that of an immured nun.

[The Edinburgh Reviewer, on stanza xxxii. *post*, suggests that the proper reading of the sentence is *vade in pacem*—not *part in peace*, but *go into peace*, or into eternal rest, a pretty intelligible mittimus to another world.

NOTE 34, page 150.

The village inn.

The accommodations of a Scottish hostelry, or inn, in the 16th century, may be collected from Dunbar's admirable tale of "The Friars of Berwick." Simon Lawder, "the gay ostler," seems to have lived very comfortably; and his wife decorated her person with a scarlet kirtle, and a belt of silk and silver, and rings upon her fingers, and feasted her paramour with rabbits, capons, partridges, and Bourdeaux wine. At least, if the Scottish inns were not good, it was not for want of encouragement from the legislature, who, so early as the reign of James I., not only enacted, that in all boroughs and fairs there be hostellaries, having stables and chambers, and provision for man and horse, but by another statute, ordained that no man, travelling on horse or foot, should presume to lodge anywhere except in these hostellaries; and that no person, save innkeepers, should receive such travellers, under the penalty of forty shillings, for exercising such hospitality.¹ But, in spite of these provident enactments, the Scottish hostels are but indifferent, and strangers continue to find reception in the houses of individuals.

NOTE 35, page 154.

The death of a dear friend.

Among other omens to which faithful credit is given among the Scottish peasantry, is what is called the "dead-bell," explained, by my friend James Hogg, to be that tinkling in the ears which the country people regard as the secret intelligence of some friend's decease.

NOTE 36, page 156.

The Goblin-Hall.

A vaulted hall under the ancient castle of Gifford or Yester, (for it bears

either name indifferently), the construction of which has from a very remote period been ascribed to magic. The Statistical Account of the Parish of Garvald and Baro gives the following account of the present state of this castle and apartment:—"Upon a peninsula, formed by the water of Hopes on the east, and a large rivulet on the west, stands the ancient castle of Yester. Sir David Dalrymple, in his Annals, relates, that 'Hugh Gifford de Yester died in 1267; that in his castle there was a capacious cavern, formed by magical art, and called in the country Bo-Hall, i. e. Hobgoblin Hall.' A stair of twenty-four steps led down to this apartment, which is a large and spacious hall, with an arched roof; and though it hath stood for so many centuries, and been exposed to the external air for a period of fifty or sixty years, it is still as firm and entire as if it had only stood a few years. From the floor of this hall, another stair of thirty-six steps leads down to a pit which hath a communication with Hopes-water. A great part of the walls of this large and ancient castle are still standing. There is a tradition, that the castle of Yester was the last fortification, in this country, that surrendered to General Gray, sent into Scotland by Protector Somerset."—*Statistical Account*, vol. xiii.—I have only to add, that, in 1737, the Goblin Hall was tenanted by the Marquis of Tweeddale's falconer, as I learn from a poem by Boyse, entitled "Retirement," written upon visiting Yester. It is now rendered inaccessible by the fall of the stair.

NOTE 37, page 156.

*There floated Haco's banner trim
Above Norwegian warriors grim.*

In 1263, Haco, King of Norway, came into the Frith of Clyde with a powerful armament, and made a descent at Largs, in Ayrshire. Here he was encountered and defeated, on the 2d October, by Alexander III. Haco retreated to Orkney, where he died soon after this disgrace to his arms. There are still existing, near the place of battle, many barrows, some of which, having been opened, were found, as usual, to contain bones and urns.

NOTE 38, page 157.

Upon his breast a pentacle.

"A pentacle is a piece of fine linen, folded with five corners, according to the five senses, and suitably inscribed with characters. This the magician extends towards the spirits which he invokes, when they are stubborn and rebellious, and refuse to be conformable unto the ceremonies and rites of magic."—See the Discourses concerning Devils and Spirits annexed to *Reginald Scott's Discovery of Witchcraft*, edition 1665, p. 66.

NOTE 39, page 157.

*As born upon that blessed night,
When yawning graves and dying groan
Proclaim'd Hell's empire overthrown.*

It is a popular article of faith, that those who are born on Christmas, or Good Friday, have the power of seeing spirits, and even of commanding them. The Spaniards imputed the haggard and downcast looks of their Philip II. to the disagreeable visions to which this privilege subjected him.

NOTE 40, page 159.

*Yet still the knightly spear and shield
The Elfin Warrior doth wield,
Upon the brown hill's breast.*

The following extract from the Essay upon the Fairy Superstitions, in the "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border," vol. ii., will show whence many of the particulars of the combat between Alexander III. and the Goblin Knight are derived:—

Gervase of Tilbury (*Otia Imperial. ap. Script. rer. Brunsvic.*, vol. i. p. 797) relates the following popular story concerning a fairy knight:—"Osbert, a bold and powerful baron, visited a noble family in the vicinity of Wandle-

bury, in the bishopric of Ely. Among other stories related in the social circle of his friends, who, according to custom, amused each other by repeating ancient tales and traditions, he was informed, that if any knight, unattended, entered an adjacent plain by moonlight, and challenged an adversary to appear, he would be immediately encountered by a spirit in the form of a knight. Osbert resolved to make the experiment, and set out, attended by a single squire, whom he ordered to remain without the limits of the plain, which was surrounded by an ancient intrenchment. On repeating the challenge, he was instantly assailed by an adversary, whom he quickly unhorsed, and seized the reins of his steed. During this operation, his ghostly opponent sprang up, and darting his spear, like a javelin, at Osbert, wounded him in the thigh. Osbert returned in triumph with the horse, which he committed to the care of his servants. The horse was of a sable colour, as well as his whole accoutrements, and apparently of great beauty and vigour. He remained with his keeper till cock-crowing, when, with eyes flashing fire, he reared, spurned the ground, and vanished. On disarming himself, Osbert perceived that he was wounded, and that one of his steel boots was full of blood. Gervase adds, that, "as long as he lived, the scar of his wound opened afresh on the anniversary of the eve on which he encountered the spirit." Less fortunate was the gallant Bohemian knight, who, travelling by night with a single companion, "came in sight of a fairy host, arrayed under displayed banners. Despising the remonstrances of his friend, the knight pricked forward to break a lance with a champion, who advanced from the ranks apparently in defiance. His companion beheld the Bohemian overthrown, horse and man, by his aerial adversary; and returning to the spot next morning, he found the mangled corpses of the knight and steed."—*Hierarchy of Blessed Angels*, p. 554.

Besides these instances of Elfin chivalry above quoted, many others might be alleged in support of employing fairy machinery in this manner. The forest of Glenmore, in the North Highlands, is believed to be haunted by a spirit called *Lham-learg*, in the array of an ancient warrior, having a bloody hand, from which he takes his name. He insists upon those with whom he meets doing battle with him; and the clergyman, who makes up an account of the district, extant in the Macfarlane MS. in the Advocates' Library, gravely assures us, that, in his time, *Lham-learg* fought with three brothers whom he met in his walk, none of whom long survived the ghostly conflict. Barclay, in his "*Euphormion*," gives a singular account of an officer who had ventured, with his servant, rather to intrude upon a haunted house in a town in Flanders, than to put up with worse quarters elsewhere. After taking the usual precautions of providing fires, lights, and arms, they watched till midnight, when behold! the severed arm of a man dropped from the ceiling; this was followed by the legs, the other arm, the trunk, and the head of the body, all separately. The members rolled together, united themselves in the presence of the astonished soldiers, and formed a gigantic warrior, who defied them both to combat. Their blows, although they penetrated the body and amputated the limbs of their strange antagonist, had, as the reader may easily believe, little effect on an enemy who possessed such powers of self-union; nor did his efforts make more effectual impression upon them. How the combat terminated I do not exactly remember, and have not the book by me; but I think the spirit made to the intruders on his mansion the usual proposal, that they should renounce their redemption; which being declined, he was obliged to retract.

The northern champions of old were accustomed peculiarly to search for and delight in, encounters with such military spectres. See a whole chapter on the subject, in BARTHOLINUS, *De Causis contemptæ Mortis a Danis*, p. 253.

NOTE 41, page 164.

*Close to the hut, no more his own,
Close to the aid he sought in vain,
The morn may find the stiffen'd swain.*

I cannot help here mentioning, that, on the night in which these lines were written, suggested, as they were, by a sudden fall of snow, beginning after sunset, an unfortunate man perished exactly in the manner here de-

scribed, and his body was next morning found close to his own house. The accident happened within five miles of the farm of Ashestiel.

NOTE 42, page 164.

Forbes.

Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo, Baronet; unequalled, perhaps, in the degree of individual affection entertained for him by his friends, as well as in the general respect and esteem of Scotland at large. His "Life of Beattie," whom he befriended and patronised in life, as well as celebrated after his decease, was not long published, before the benevolent and affectionate biographer was called to follow the subject of his narrative. This melancholy event very shortly succeeded the marriage of the friend to whom this introduction is addressed, with one of Sir William's daughters.

NOTE 43, page 167.

Friar Rush.

Alias, "Will o' the Wisp." This personage is a strolling demon, or *esprit follet*, who, once upon a time, got admittance into a monastery as a scullion, and played the monks many pranks. He was also a sort of Robin Goodfellow, and Jack o' Lanthorn. It is in allusion to this mischievous demon that Milton's clown speaks,—

"She was pinched, and pulled, she said,
And he by *Friar's lantern* led."

"The History of Friar Rush" is of extreme rarity, and, for some time, even the existence of such a book was doubted, although it is expressly alluded to by Reginald Scott, in his "Discovery of Witchcraft." I have perused a copy in the valuable library of my friend Mr Heber; and I observe, from Mr Beloe's "Anecdotes of Literature," that there is one in the excellent collection of the Marquis of Stafford.

NOTE 44, page 170.

Crichton Castle.

A large ruinous castle on the banks of the Tyne, about ten miles from Edinburgh. As indicated in the text, it was built at different times, and with a very differing regard to splendour and accommodation. The oldest part of the building is a narrow keep, or tower, such as formed the mansion of a lesser Scottish baron; but so many additions have been made to it, that there is now a large court-yard, surrounded by buildings of different ages. The eastern front of the court is raised above a portico, and decorated with entablatures, bearing anchors. All the stones of this front are cut into diamond facets, the angular projections of which have an uncommonly rich appearance. The inside of this part of the building appears to have contained a gallery of great length, and uncommon elegance. Access was given to it by a magnificent staircase, now quite destroyed. The soffits are ornamented with twining cordage and rosettes, and the whole seems to have been far more splendid than was usual in Scottish castles. The castle belonged originally to the Chancellor, Sir William Crichton, and probably owed to him its first enlargement, as well as its being taken by the Earl of Douglas, who imputed to Crichton's counsels the death of his predecessor, Earl William, beheaded in Edinburgh Castle, with his brother, in 1440. It is said to have been totally demolished on that occasion; but the present state of the ruin shows the contrary. In 1483, it was garrisoned by Lord Crichton, then its proprietor, against King James III., whose displeasure he had incurred by seducing his sister Margaret, in revenge, it is said, for the monarch having dishonoured his bed. From the Crichton family the castle passed to that of the Hepburns, Earls of Bothwell; and when the forfeitures of Stewart, the last Earl of Bothwell, were divided, the barony and castle of Crichton fell to the share of the Earl of Buccleuch. They were afterwards the property of the Pringles of Clifton, and are now that of Sir John Callander, Baronet. It were to be wished the proprietor would take a little pains, to preserve these splendid remains of antiquity, which are at present used as a fold for sheep, and wintering cattle; although, perhaps, there are very

few ruins in Scotland which display so well the style and beauty of ancient castle-architecture. The castle of Crichton has a dungeon-vault, called the *Massy More*. The epithet, which is not uncommonly applied to the prisons of other old castles in Scotland, is of Saracenic origin. It occurs twice in the "*Epistole Itinerarie*" of Tollius:—" *Carcer subterraneus, sive, ut Mauri appellant MAZMORRA*," p. 147; and again—" *Coguntur omnes Captivi sub noctem in ergastula subterranea, quæ Turcæ Algerani vocant MAZMORRAS*," p. 243. The same word applies to the dungeons of the ancient Moorish castles in Spain, and serves to show from what nation the Gothic style of castle-building was originally derived.

NOTE 45, page 171

Earl Adam Hepburn.

He was the second Earl of Bothwell, and fell in the field of Flodden, where, according to an ancient English poet, he distinguished himself by a furious attempt to retrieve the day:—

"Then on the Scottish part, right proud,
The Earl of Bothwell then out brou,
And stepping forth, with stomach good,
Into the enemies' throng he thrust;
And *Bothwell!* *Bothwell!* cried bold,
To cause his souldiers to ensue,
But there he caught a welcome cold,
The Englishmen straight down him thrue.
Thus *Haburn* through his hardy heart
His fatal fine in conflict found," &c.
Flodden Field, a Poem; edited by
H. Weber. Edin. 1803.

Adam was grandfather to James, Earl of Bothwell, too well known in the history of Queen Mary.

NOTE 46, page 172.

*For that a messenger from heaven,
In vain to James had counsel given,
Against the English war.*

This story is told by Pitscottie with characteristic simplicity:—

"The King, seeing that France could get no support of him for that time, made a proclamation, full hastily, through all the realm of Scotland, both east and west, south and north, as well in the isles as in the firm land, to all manner of men between sixty and sixteen years, that they should be ready, within twenty days, to pass with him, with forty days' victual, and to meet at the Burrow-muir of Edinburgh, and there to pass forward where he pleased. His proclamations were hastily obeyed, contrary to the Council of Scotland's will; but every man loved his Prince so well, that they would on no ways disobey him; but every man caused make his proclamation so hastily, conform to the charge of the King's proclamation.

"The King came to Lithgow, where he happened to be for the time at the Council, very sad and dolorous, making his devotion to God, to send him good chance and fortune in his voyage. In this meantime there came a man, clad in a blue gown, in at the kirk door, and belted about him in a roll of linen cloth; a pair of brookins on his feet, to the great of his legs; with all other hose and clothes conform thereto; but he had nothing on his head, but syde 2 red yellow hair behind, and on his haffets, 3 which wane down to his shoulders; but his forehead was bald and bare. He seemed to be a man of two-and-fifty years, with a great pike staff in his hand, and came first forward among the lords, crying and speiring; for the King, saying, he desired to speak with him. While, at the last, he came where the King was sitting in the desk at his prayers; but when he saw the King, he made him little reverence or salutation, but leaned down groffing on the desk before him, and said to him in this manner, as after follows:—'Sir King, my mother hath sent me to you, desiring you not to pass, at this time, where thou art purposed; for if thou does, thou wilt not fare well in thy journey, nor none that passeth with thee. Further, she bade thee melf with no woman, nor use their counsel, nor let them touch thy body, nor thou theirs; for if thou do it, thou wilt be con-founded and brought to shame.'

"By this man had spoken thir words unto the King's grace, the evening song was near done, and the King paused on thir words, stuiting to give him an answer; but, in the mean time, before the King's eyes, and in the presence of all the lords that were about him for the time, this man vanished away, and could no ways be seen or comprehended, but vanished away as he had been a blink of the sun, or a whip of the whirlwind, and could no more be seen. I heard say, Sir David Lindsay Lyon-herald, and John Inglis the marshal, who were, at that time, young men, and special servants to the King's grace, were standing presently beside the King, who thought to have laid hands on this man, that they might have speired further things at him; But all for naught: they could not touch him; for he vanished away betwixt them, and was no more seen."

1 BUSHING.

2 Long.

3 Cheeks.

4 Asking.

5 Meddle.

NOTE 47, page 172.

The wild-buck bells.

I am glad of an opportunity to describe the cry of the deer by another word than *braying*, although the latter has been sanctified by the use of the Scottish metrical translation of the Psalms. *Bell* seems to be an abbreviation of *bellow*. This sylvan sound conveyed great delight to our ancestors, chiefly, I suppose, from association. A gentle knight in the reign of Henry VIII., Sir Thomas Wortley, built Wantley Lodge, in Wanciffe Forest, for the pleasure (as an ancient inscription testifies) of "listening to the hart's *bell*."

NOTE 48, page 172.

June saw his father's overthrow.

The rebellion against James III. was signalized by the cruel circumstance of his son's presence in the hostile army. When the king saw his own banner displayed against him, and his son in the faction of his enemies, he lost the little courage he had ever possessed, fled out of the field, fell from his horse as it started at a woman and water-pitcher, and was slain, it is not well understood by whom. James IV., after the battle, passed to Stirling, and hearing the monks of the chapel-royal deploring the death of his father, their founder, he was seized with deep remorse, which manifested itself in severe penances. See a following Note on Stanza ix. of Canto v. The battle of Sauchie-burn, in which James III. fell, was fought 18th June 1488.

NOTE 49, page 177.

The Borough-moor.

The Borough, or Common Moor of Edinburgh, was of very great extent, reaching from the southern walls of the city to the bottom of Braid Hills. It was anciently a forest; and, in that state, was so great a nuisance, that the inhabitants of Edinburgh had permission granted to them of building wooden galleries, projecting over the street, in order to encourage them to consume the timber, which they seem to have done very effectually. When James IV. mustered the array of the kingdom there, in 1513, the Borough-moor was, according to Hawthornden, "a field spacious, and delightful by the shade of many stately and aged oaks." Upon that, and similar occasions, the royal standard is traditionally said to have been displayed from the Hare-Stane, a high stone, now built into the wall, on the left hand of the high-way leading towards Braid, not far from the head of Bruntsfield Links. The Hare-Stane probably derives its name from the British word *Har*, signifying an army.

NOTE 50, page 178.

— in proud Scotland's royal shield,
The ruddy lion ramp'd in gold.

The well-known arms of Scotland. If you will believe Boethius and Buchanan, the double tressure round the shield, mentioned, *counter fleur-de-lysés or lingued and armed azure*, was first assumed by Echinus, King of Scotland, contemporary of Charlemagne, and founder of the celebrated League with France; but later antiquaries make poor Eochy, or Achy, little better than a sort of King of Brentford, whom old Grig (who has also swelled into Gregorius Magnus) associated with himself in the important duty of governing some part of the north-eastern coast of Scotland.

NOTE 51, page 181.

— *Caledonia's Queen is changed.*

The Old Town of Edinburgh was secured on the north side by a lake now drained, and on the south by a wall, which there was some attempt to make defensible even so late as 1745. The gates, and the greater part of the wall, have been pulled down, in the course of the late extensive and beautiful enlargement of the city. My ingenious and valued friend, Mr Thomas Campbell, proposed to celebrate Edinburgh under the epithet here borrowed.

But the "Queen of the North" has not been so fortunate as to receive from so eminent a pen the proposed distinction.

NOTE 52, page 185.

The cloth-yard arrows

This is no poetical exaggeration. In some of the counties of England, distinguished for archery, shafts of this extraordinary length were actually used. Thus, at the battle of Blackheath, between the troops of Henry VII., and the Cornish insurgents, in 1496, the bridge of Dartford was defended by a picked band of archers from the rebel army, "whose arrows," says Holinshed, "were in length a full cloth yard." The Scottish, according to Ascham, had a proverb, that every English archer carried under his belt twenty-four Scots, in allusion to his bundle of unerring shafts.

NOTE 53, page 185.

*He saw the hardy burghers there
March arm'd, on foot, with faces bare.*

The Scottish burgesses were, like yeomen, appointed to be armed with bows and sheaves, sword, buckler, knife, spear, or a good axe instead of a bow, if worth £100; their armour to be of white or bright harness. They wore *white hats*, i. e. bright steel caps, without crest or visor. By an act of James IV., their *weapon-schawings* are appointed to be held four times a year, under the aldermen or bailiffs.

NOTE 54, page 185.

*On foot the yeoman too —
Each at his back (a slender store)
His forty days' provision bore, . . .
His arms were halbert, axe, or spear.*

Bows and quivers were in vain recommended to the peasantry of Scotland, by repeated statutes; spears and axes seem universally to have been used instead of them. Their defensive armour was the plate-jack, hauberk, or brigantine; and their missile weapons crossbows and culverins. All wore swords of excellent temper, according to Patten; and a voluminous handkerchief round their neck, "not for cold, but for cutting." The mace also was much used in the Scottish army: The old poem on the battle of Flodden mentions a band—

*"Who manfully did meet their foes,
With leaden mauls, and lances long."*

When the feudal array of the kingdom was called forth, each man was obliged to appear with forty days' provision. When this was expended, which took place before the battle of Flodden, the army melted away of course. Almost all the Scottish forces, except a few knights, men-at-arms, and the Border-prickers, who formed excellent light-cavalry, acted upon foot.

NOTE 55, page 187.

*A banquet rich, and costly wines,
To Marmion and his train.*

In all transactions of great or petty importance, and among whomsoever taking place, it would seem that a present of wine was a uniform and indispensable preliminary. It was not to Sir John Falstaff alone that such an introductory preface was necessary, however well judged and acceptable on the part of Mr Brook; for Sir Ralph Sadler, while on an embassy to Scotland in 1539-40, mentions, with complacency, "the same night came Rothersay (the herald so called) to me again, and brought me wine from the King, both white and red."—*Clifford's Edition*, p. 39.

NOTE 56, page 189.

*— his iron belt,
That bound his breast in penance pain,
In memory of his father slain.*

Few readers need to be reminded of this belt, to the weight of which

James added certain ounces every year that he lived. Pittscottie founds his belief, that James was not slain in the battle of Flodden, because the English never had this token of the iron belt to show to any Scottishman. The person and character of James are delineated according to our best historians. His romantic disposition, which led him highly to relish gaiety approaching to license, was, at the same time, tinged with enthusiastic devotion. These propensities sometimes formed a strange contrast. He was wont, during his fits of devotion, to assume the dress, and conform to the rules, of the order of Franciscans; and when he had thus done penance for some time in Stirling, to plunge again into the tide of pleasure. Probably, too, with no unusual inconsistency, he sometimes laughed at the superstitious observances to which he at other times subjected himself.

NOTE 57, page 189.

Sir Hugh the Heron's wife.

It has been already noticed, [see note to stanza xiii. of canto i.] that King James's acquaintance with Lady Heron of Ford did not commence until he marched into England. Our historians impute to the King's infatuated passion the delays which led to the fatal defeat of Flodden. The author of "The Genealogy of the Heron Family" endeavours, with laudable anxiety, to clear the Lady Ford from this scandal: that she came and went, however, between the armies of James and Surrey, is certain. See *Pinkerton's History*, and the authorities he refers to, vol. ii. p. 99.

NOTE 58, page 190.

— *the fair Queen of France*
Sent him a torquois ring and glove,
And charged him, as her knight and love,
For her to break a lance;
And strike three strokes with Scottish brand.

"Also the Queen of France wrote a love-letter to the King of Scotland, calling him her love, showing him that she had suffered much rebuke in France for the defending of his honour. She believed surely that he would recompense her again with some of his kingly support in her necessity; that is to say, that he would raise her an army, and come three foot of ground on English ground, for her sake. To that effect she sent him a ring off her finger, with fourteen thousand French crowns to pay his expenses." *Pittscottie*, p. 110.—A torquois ring; probably this fatal gift is, with James's sword and dagger, preserved in the College of Heralds, London.

NOTE 59, page 192.

Archibald Bell-the-Cat.

Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus, a man remarkable for strength of body and mind, acquired the popular name of *Bell-the-Cat*, upon the following remarkable occasion:—James the Third, of whom Pittscottie complains, that he delighted more in music and "policies of building," than in hunting, hawking, and other noble exercises, was so ill advised as to make favourites of his architects and musicians, whom the same historian irreverently terms masons and fiddlers. His nobility, who did not sympathise in the King's respect for the fine arts, were extremely incensed at the honours conferred on those persons, particularly on Cochrane, a mason, who had been created Earl of Mar; and, seizing the opportunity, when, in 1482, the King had convoked the whole array of the country to march against the English, they held a midnight council in the church of Lauder, for the purpose of forcibly removing these minions from the King's person. When all had agreed on the propriety of this measure, Lord Gray told the assembly the apologue of the Mice, who had formed a resolution, that it would be highly advantageous to their community to tie a bell round the cat's neck, that they might hear her approach at a distance; but which public measure unfortunately miscarried, from no mouse being willing to undertake the task of fastening the bell. "I understand the moral," said Angus, "and, that what we propose may not lack execution, I will bell the cat."

NOTE 60, page 192.

*Against the war had Angus stood,
And chafed his royal lord.*

Angus was an old man when the war against England was resolved upon. He earnestly spoke against that measure from its commencement; and, on the eve of the battle of Flodden, remonstrated so freely upon the impolicy of fighting, that the King said to him, with scorn and indignation, "If he was afraid he might go home." The Earl burst into tears at this insupportable insult, and retired accordingly, leaving his sons George, Master of Angus, and Sir William of Glenbervie, to command his followers. They were both slain in the battle, with two hundred gentlemen of the name of Douglas. The aged Earl, broken-hearted at the calamities of his house and his country, retired into a religious house, where he died about a year after the field of Flodden.

NOTE 61, page 193.

Tantallon Hold.

The ruins of Tantallon Castle occupy a high rock projecting into the German Ocean, about two miles east of North Berwick. The building formed a principal castle of the Douglas family, and when the Earl of Angus was banished, in 1527, it continued to hold out against James V. The King went in person against it, and for its reduction, borrowed from the Castle of Dunbar, then belonging to the Duke of Albany, two great cannons, "Thrawn-mouth'd Meg and her Marrow;" also, "two great botcards, and two moyan, two double falcons, and four quarter falcons." Yet, notwithstanding all this apparatus, James was forced to raise the siege, and only afterwards obtained possession of Tantallon by treaty with the governor, Simon Panango. When the Earl of Angus returned from banishment, upon the death of James, he again obtained possession of Tantallon, and it actually afforded refuge to an English ambassador, under circumstances similar to those described in the text. This was no other than the celebrated Sir Ralph Sadler, who resided there for some time under Angus's protection, after the failure of his negotiation for matching the infant Mary with Edward VI.

NOTE 62, page 193.

Their motto on his blade.

A very ancient sword, in possession of Lord Douglas, bears, among a great deal of flourishing, two hands pointing to a heart, which is placed betwixt them, and the date 1329, being the year in which Bruce charged the Good Lord Douglas to carry his heart to the Holy Land.

NOTE 63, page 196.

—— *Martin Swart.*

A German general, who commanded the auxiliaries sent by the Duchess of Burgundy with Lambert Simnel. He was defeated and killed at Stoke-field. The name of this German general is preserved by that of the field of battle, which is called, after him, Swart-moor. There were songs about him long current in England.—See Dissertation prefixed to *Ritson's Ancient Songs*, 1792, p. lxi.

NOTE 64, page 193.

The Cross.

The Cross of Edinburgh was an ancient and curious structure. The lower part was an octagonal tower, sixteen feet in diameter, and about fifteen feet high. At each angle there was a pillar, and between them an arch, of the Grecian shape. Above these was a projecting battlement, with a turret at each corner, and medallions, of rude but curious workmanship, between them. Above this rose the proper Cross, a column of one stone, upwards o. twenty feet high, surmounted with a unicorn. This pillar is preserved in the grounds of the property of Drum, near Edinburgh.

NOTE 65, page 199.

This awful summons came.

This supernatural citation is mentioned by all our Scottish historians. It was, probably, like the apparition at Linlithgow, an attempt, by those averse to the war, to impose upon the superstitious temper of James IV.

NOTE 66, page 202

— *one of his own ancestry,
Drove the Monks forth of Coventry.*

This relates to the catastrophe of a real Robert de Marmion, in the reign of King Stephen, whom William of Newbury describes with some attributes of my fictitious hero: "*Homo bellicosus, ferocia, et astucia fere nullo suo tempore impar.*" This Baron, having expelled the monks from the church of Coventry, was not long of experiencing the divine judgment, as the same monks, no doubt, termed his disaster. Having waged a feudal war with the Earl of Chester, Marmion's horse fell, as he charged in the van of his troop against a body of the Earl's followers: the rider's thigh being broken by the fall, his head was cut off by a common foot-soldier, ere he could receive any succour. The whole story is told by William of Newbury.

NOTE 67, page 205.

— *the savage Dane
At lol more deep the mead did drain.*

The lol of the heathen Danes (a word still applied to Christmas in Scotland) was solemnized with great festivity. The humour of the Danes at table displayed itself in pelting each other with bones; and Torfæus tells a long and curious story, in the History of Hrolfe Kraka, of one Hottus, an inmate of the Court of Denmark, who was so generally assailed with these missiles, that he constructed, out of the bones with which he was overwhelmed, a very respectable entrenchment, against those who continued the raillery.

NOTE 68, page 205.

On Christmas Eve

In Roman Catholic countries, mass is never said at night, except on Christmas eve.

NOTE 69, page 206.

*Who lists may in their mumming see
Traces of ancient mystery*

It seems certain, that the *Mummers* of England, who (in Northumberland at least) used to go about in disguise to the neighbouring houses, bearing the then useless ploughshare; and the *Guisards* of Scotland, not yet in total disuse, present, in some indistinct degree, a shadow of the old mysteries, which were the origin of the English drama. In Scotland, (*me ipso teste*), we were wont, during my boyhood, to take the characters of the apostles, at least of Peter, Paul, and Judas Iscariot; the first had the keys, the second carried a sword, and the last the bag, in which the dole of our neighbours' plum-cake was deposited. One played a champion, and recited some traditional rhymes; another was

— *"Alexander, King of Macedon,
Who conquer'd all the world but Scotland alone.*

These, and many such verses, were repeated, but by rote and unconnectedly. There was also, occasionally, I believe, a Saint George. In all, there was a confused resemblance of the ancient mysteries, in which the characters of Scripture, the Nine Worthies, and other popular personages, were usually exhibited.

NOTE 70, page 208.

The Highlander —
Will, on a Friday morn, look pale,
If ask'd to tell a fairy tale.

The *Daoine shi*, or *Men of Peace*, of the Scottish Highlanders, rather resemble the Scandinavian *Duergar* than the English Fairies. Notwithstanding their name, they are, if not absolutely malevolent, at least peevish, discontented, and apt to do mischief on slight provocation. The belief of their existence is deeply impressed on the Highlanders, who think they are particularly offended at mortals who talk of them, who wear their favourite colour, green, or in any respect interfere with their affairs. This is especially to be avoided on Friday, when, whether as dedicated to Venus, with whom, in Germany, this subterraneous people are held nearly connected, or for a more solemn reason, they are more active, and possessed of greater power. Some curious particulars concerning the popular superstitions of the Highlanders may be found in Dr Graham's Picturesque Sketches of Perthshire.

NOTE 71, page 208.

The towers of Franchémont.

The journal of the friend to whom the Fourth Canto of the Poem is inscribed, furnished me with the following account of a striking superstition :

"Passed the pretty little village of Franchémont, (near Spaw), with the romantic ruins of the old castle of the Counts of that name. The road leads through many delightful vales on a rising ground ; at the extremity of one of them stands the ancient castle, now the subject of many superstitious legends. It is firmly believed by the neighbouring peasantry, that the last Baron of Franchémont deposited, in one of the vaults of the castle, a ponderous chest, containing an immense treasure in gold and silver, which, by some magic spell, was intrusted to the care of the Devil, who is constantly found sitting on the chest in the shape of a huntsman. Any one adventurous enough to touch the chest is instantly seized with the palsy. Upon one occasion, a priest of noted piety was brought to the vault : he used all the arts of exorcism to persuade his infernal majesty to vacate his seat, but in vain ; the huntsman remained immovable. At last, moved by the earnestness of the priest, he told him that he would agree to resign the chest, if the exorciser would sign his name with blood. But the priest understood his meaning, and refused, as by that act he would have delivered over his soul to the Devil. Yet if anybody can discover the mystic words used by the person who deposited the treasure, and pronounce them, the fiend must instantly decamp. I had many stories of a similar nature from a peasant, who had himself seen the Devil in the shape of a great cat."

NOTE 72, page 216.

— *the huge and sweeping brand*
Which wont of yore, in battle fray,
His foeman's limbs to shred away,
As wood-knife lops the sapling spray.

The Earl of Angus had strength and personal activity corresponding to his courage. Spens of Kilspindie, a favourite of James IV., having spoken of him lightly, the Earl met him while hawking, and, compelling him to single combat, at one blow cut asunder his thigh-bone, and killed him on the spot. But ere he could obtain James's pardon for this slaughter, Angus was obliged to yield his castle of Hermitage, in exchange for that of Bothwell, which was some diminution to the family greatness. The sword with which he struck so remarkable a blow, was presented by his descendant James, Earl of Morton, afterwards Regent of Scotland, to Lord Lindesay of the Byres, when he defied Bothwell to single combat on Carberry Hill. See Introduction to the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*.

NOTE 73, page 218.

And hopes thou hence unscathed to go ?—
No, by St Bride of Bothwell, no !—
Up drawbridge, grooms !—what, Warder, ho !
Let the portcullis fall.

This ebullition of violence in the potent Earl of Angus is not without its example in the real history of the house of Douglas, whose chieftains possessed the ferocity with the heroic virtues of a savage state. The most curious instance occurred in the case of Maclellan, Tutor of Bombay, who

having refused to acknowledge the pre-eminence claimed by Douglas over the gentlemen and Barons of Galloway, was seized and imprisoned by the Earl, in his castle of the Thrieve, on the borders of Kirkcudbrightshire. Sir Patrick Gray, commander of King James the Second's guard, was uncle to the Tutor of Bombay, and obtained from the King "a sweet letter of supplication," praying the Earl to deliver his prisoner into Gray's hand. When Sir Patrick arrived at the castle, he was received with all the honour due to a favourite servant of the King's household; but while he was at dinner, the Earl, who suspected his errand, caused his prisoner to be led forth and beheaded. After dinner, Sir Patrick presented the King's letter to the Earl, who received it with great affectation of reverence; "and took him by the hand, and led him forth to the green, where the gentleman was lying dead, and showed him the manner, and said, 'Sir Patrick, you are come a little too late; yonder is your sister's son lying, but he wants the head: take his body, and do with it what you will.'—Sir Patrick answered again, with a sore heart, and said, 'My lord, if ye have taken from him his head, dispense upon the body as ye please;' and with that called for his horse, and leaped thereon; and when he was on horseback, he said to the Earl in this manner, 'My lord, if I live, you shall be rewarded for your labours that you have used at this time, according to your demerits.'

"At this saying the Earl was highly offended, and cried for horse. Sir Patrick, seeing the Earl's fury, spurred his horse, but he was chased near Edinburgh ere they left him; and had it not been his led horse was so tried and good, he had been taken."—*Pitcottie's History*, p. 39.

NOTE 74, page 219.

*A letter forged!—Saint Jude to speed!
Did ever knight so foul a deed!*

Lest the reader should partake of the Earl's astonishment, and consider the crime as inconsistent with the manners of the period, I have to remind him of the numerous forgeries (partly executed by a female assistant) devised by Robert of Artois, to forward his suit against the Countess Matilda; which, being detected, occasioned his flight into England, and proved the remote cause of Edward the Third's memorable wars in France. John Harding, also, was expressly hired by Edward VI. to forge such documents as might appear to establish the claim of fealty asserted over Scotland by the English monarchs.

NOTE 75, page 221.

Twisel Bridge.

On the evening previous to the memorable battle of Flodden, Surrey's head-quarters were at Barmoor Wood, and King James held an inaccessible position on the ridge of Floddenhill, one of the last and lowest emplacements detached from the ridge of Cheviot. The Till, a deep and slow river, winded between the armies. On the morning of the 9th September 1513, Surrey marched in a north-westerly direction, and crossed the Till, with his van and artillery, at Twisel Bridge, nigh where that river joins the Tweed, his rear-guard column passing about a mile higher, by a ford. This movement had the double effect of placing his army between King James and his supplies from Scotland, and of striking the Scottish monarch with surprise, as he seems to have relied on the depth of the river in his front. But as the passage, both over the bridge and through the ford, was difficult and slow, it seems possible that the English might have been attacked to great advantage while struggling with these natural obstacles. I know not if we are to impute James's forbearance to want of military skill, or to the romantic declaration which Pitcottie puts in his mouth, "that he was determined to have his enemies before him on a plain field," and therefore would suffer no interruption to be given, even by artillery, to their passing the river.

NOTE 76, page 223.

*Hence might they see the full array
Of either host, for deadly fray.*

The reader cannot here expect a full account of the battle of Flodden

but, so far as is necessary to understand the romance, I beg to remind him, that, when the English army, by their skilful countermarch, were fairly placed between King James and his own country, the Scottish monarch resolved to fight; and, setting fire to his tents, descended from the ridge of Flodden to secure the neighbouring eminence of Brankstone, on which that village is built. Thus the two armies met, almost without seeing each other, when, according to the old poem of "Flodden Field,"

"The English line stretch'd east and west
And southward were their faces set;
The Scottish northward proudly prest,
And manfully their foe they met."

The English army advanced in four divisions. On the right, which first engaged, were the sons of Earl Surrey, namely, Thomas Howard, the Admiral of England, and Sir Edmund, the Knight-Marshal of the army. Their divisions were separated from each other; but, at the request of Sir Edmund, his brother's battalion was drawn very near to his own. The centre was commanded by Surrey in person; the left wing by Sir Edward Stanley, with the men of Lancashire, and of the palatinate of Chester. Lord Dacre, with a large body of horse, formed a reserve. When the smoke, which the wind had driven between the armies, was somewhat dispersed, they perceived the Scots, who had moved down the hill in a similar order of battle, and in deep silence. The Earls of Huntly and of Home commanded their left wing, and charged Sir Edmund Howard with such success as entirely to defeat his part of the English right wing. Sir Edmund's banner was beaten down, and he himself escaped with difficulty to his brother's division. The Admiral, however, stood firm; and Dacre advancing to his support with the reserve of cavalry, probably between the interval of the divisions commanded by the brothers Howard, appears to have kept the victors in effectual check. Home's men, chiefly Borderers, began to pillage the baggage of both armies; and their leader is branded by the Scottish historians with negligence or treachery. On the other hand, Huntly, on whom they bestow many encomiums, is said by the English historians to have left the field after the first charge. Meanwhile the Admiral, whose flank these chiefs ought to have attacked, availed himself of their inactivity, and pushed forward against another large division of the Scottish army in his front, headed by the Earls of Crawford and Montrose, both of whom were slain, and their forces routed. On the left, the success of the English was yet more decisive; for the Scottish right wing, consisting of undisciplined Highlanders, commanded by Lennox and Argyle, was unable to sustain the charge of Sir Edward Stanley, and especially the severe execution of the Lancashire archers. The King and Surrey, who commanded the respective centres of their armies, were meanwhile engaged in close and dubious conflict. James, surrounded by the flower of his kingdom, and impatient of the galling discharge of arrows, supported also by his reserve under Bothwell, charged with such fury, that the standard of Surrey was in danger. At that critical moment, Stanley, who had routed the left wing of the Scottish, pursued his career of victory, and arrived on the right flank, and in the rear of James's division, which, throwing itself into a circle, disputed the battle till night came on. Surrey then drew back his forces; for the Scottish centre not having been broken, and their left wing being victorious, he yet doubted the event of the field. The Scottish army, however, felt their loss, and abandoned the field of battle in disorder, before dawn. They lost, perhaps, from eight to ten thousand men; but that included the very prime of their nobility, gentry, and even clergy. Scarce a family of eminence but has an ancestor killed at Flodden; and there is no province in Scotland, even at this day, where the battle is mentioned without a sensation of terror and sorrow. The English lost also a great number of men, perhaps within one-third of the vanquished, but they were of inferior note.

NOTE 77, page 224.

— Brian Tunstall, stainless knight.

Sir Brian Tunstall, called, in the romantic language of the time, Tunstall the Undeified, was one of the few Englishmen of rank slain at Flodden.

He figures in the ancient English poem, to which I may safely refer my readers; as an edition, with full explanatory notes, has been published by my friend Mr Henry Weber. Tunstall, perhaps, derived his epithet of *undefiled* from his white armour and banner, the latter bearing a white cock, about to crow, as well as from his unstained loyalty and knightly faith. His place of residence was Thurland Castle.

NOTE 78, page 231.

*Reckless of life, he desperate fought,
And fell on Flodden plain:
And well in death his trusty brand,
Firm clench'd within his manly hand,
Besewm'd the Monarch slain.*

There can be no doubt that King James fell in the battle of Flodden. He was killed, says the curious French Gazette, within a lance's length of the Earl of Surrey; and the same account adds, that none of his division were made prisoners, though many were killed; a circumstance that testifies the desperation of their resistance. The Scottish historians record many of the idle reports which passed among the vulgar of their day. Home was accused, by the popular voice, not only of failing to support the King, but even of having carried him out of the field, and murdered him. And this tale was revived in my remembrance, by an unauthenticated story of a skeleton, wrapped in a bull's hide, and surrounded with an iron chain, said to have been found in the well of Home-Castle; for which, on inquiry, I could never find any better authority than the sexton of the parish having said, that, *if the well were cleaned out, he would not be surprised at such a discovery.* Home was the chamberlain of the King, and his prime favourite; he had much to lose (in fact did lose all) in consequence of James's death, and nothing earthly to gain by that event: but the retreat, or inactivity of the left wing which he commanded, after defeating Sir Edmund Howard, and even the circumstance of his returning unhurt, and loaded with spoil, from so fatal a conflict, rendered the propagation of any calumny against him easy and acceptable. Other reports gave a still more romantic turn to the King's fate, and averred that James, weary of greatness after the carnage among his nobles, had gone on a pilgrimage, to merit absolution for the death of his father, and the breach of his oath of amity to Henry. In particular, it was objected to the English that they could never show the token of the iron belt; which, however, he was likely enough to have laid aside on the day of battle, as encumbering his personal exertions. They produce a better evidence, the monarch's sword and dagger, which are still preserved in the Herald's College in London. Stowe has recorded a degrading story of the disgrace with which the remains of the unfortunate monarch were treated in his time. An unhewn column marks the spot where James fell, still called the King's Stone.

NOTE 79, page 231.

The fair cathedral storm'd and took.

This storm of Lichfield cathedral, which had been garrisoned on the part of the King, took place in the Great Civil War. Lord Brook, who, with Sir John Gill, commanded the assailants, was shot with a musket-ball through the vizor of his helmet. The royalists remarked, that he was killed by a shot fired from St Chad's cathedral, and upon St Chad's Day, and received his death-wound in the very eye with which, he had said, he hoped to see the ruin of all the cathedrals in England. The magnificent church in question suffered cruelly upon this, and other occasions; the principal spire being ruined by the fire of the besiegers.

NOTES

TO

THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

NOTE 1, page 245.

— the heights of *Uam-Var*,
And roused the cavern, where, 'tis told,
A giant made his den of old.

JA-VAR, as the name is pronounced, or more properly *Uaighmor*, is a mountain to the north-east of the village of Callander in Menzies, deriving its name, which signifies the great den, or cavern, from a sort of retreat among the rocks on the south side, said, by tradition, to have been the abode of a giant. In latter times, it was the refuge of robbers and banditti, who have been only extirpated within these forty or fifty years. Strictly speaking, this stronghold is not a cave, as the name would imply, but a sort of small inclosure, or recess, surrounded with large rocks, and open above head.

NOTE 2, page 245.

*Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed,
Unmatch'd for courage, breath, and speed.*

"The hounds which we call Saint Hubert's hounds, are commonly all black, yet neuertheless, the race is so mingled at these days, that we find them of all colours. These are the hounds which the abbots of St Hubert haue always kept some of their race or kind, in honour or remembrance of the saint, which was a hunter with S. Eustace. Whereupon we may conclude that (by the grace of God) all good huntsmen shall follow them into paradise."—*The noble Art of Venerie or Hunting, translated and collected for the Use of all Noblemen and Gentlemen Lond. 1611. 4to, p. 15.*

NOTE 3, page 246.

*For the death-wound and death-halloo
Muster'd his breath, his whinyard drew.*

When the stag turned to bay, the ancient hunter had the perilous task of going in upon, and killing or disabling the desperate animal. At certain times of the year this was held particularly dangerous, a wound received from a stag's horn being then deemed poisonous, and more dangerous than one from the tusks of a boar, as the old rhyme testifies—

"If thou be hurt with hart, it brings thee to thy bier,
But barber's hand will boar's hurt heal, therefore thou
need'st not fear.

At all times, however, the task was dangerous, and to be adventured upon wisely and warily, either by getting behind the stag while he was gazing on the hounds, or by watching an opportunity to gallop roundly in upon him, and kill him with the sword.

NOTE 4, page 248.

*And now to issue from the glen,
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,
Unless he climb, with footing nice,
A far-projecting precipice.*

Until the present road was made through the romantic pass which I

have presumptuously attempted to describe in the preceding stanzas, there was no mode of issuing out of the defile called the Trosachs, excepting by a sort of ladder, composed of the branches and roots of trees.

NOTE 5, page 249.

*To meet with Highland plunderers here,
Were worse than loss of steed or deer.*

The clans who inhabited the romantic regions in the neighbourhood of Loch Katrine, were, even until a late period, much addicted to predatory excursions upon their Lowland neighbours.

NOTE 6, page 252.

*A grey-hair'd sire, whose eye intent,
Was on the vision'd future bent.*

If force of evidence could authorise us to believe facts inconsistent with the general laws of nature, enough might be produced in favour of the existence of the Second-sight. It is called in Gaelic *Taishitaraugh*, from *Taish*, an unreal or shadowy appearance; and those possessed of the faculty are called *Taishatrin*, which may be aptly translated visionaries. Martin, a steady believer in the second-sight, gives the following account of it:—

“The second-sight is a singular faculty of seeing an otherwise invisible object without any previous means used by the person that used it for that end: the vision makes such a lively impression upon the seers, that they neither see nor think of anything else, except the vision, as long as it continues; and then they appear pensive or jovial, according to the object that was represented to them.

“At the sight of a vision, the eyelids of the person are erected, and the eyes continue staring until the object vanish. This is obvious to others who are by when the persons happen to see a vision, and occurred more than once to my own observation, and to others that were with me.”

“If a woman is seen standing at a man's left hand, it is a presage that she will be his wife, whether they be married to others, or unmarried at the time of the apparition.

“To see a spark of fire fall upon one's arm or breast is a forerunner of a dead child to be seen in the arms of those persons; of which there are several fresh instances.”

“To see a seat empty at the time of one's sitting in it, is a presage of that person's death: soon after.”—*Martin's Description of the Western Islands*, 1716, 8vo, p. 300, & seq.

To these particulars innumerable examples might be added, all attested by grave and credible authors. But, in despite of evidence which neither Bacon, Boyle, nor Johnson, were able to resist, the *Taish*, with all its visionary properties, seems to be now universally abandoned to the use of poetry. The exquisitely beautiful poem of Lochiel will at once occur to the recollection of every reader.

NOTE 7, page 253.

*Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,
Some chief had framed a rustic bower.*

The Celtic chieftains, whose lives were continually exposed to peril, had usually, in the most retired spot of their domains, some place of retreat for the hour of necessity, which, as circumstances would admit, was a tower, a cavern, or a rustic hut, in a strong and secluded situation. One of these last gave refuge to the unfortunate Charles Edward, in his perilous wanderings after the battle of Culloden.

NOTE 8, page 255.

*My sire's tall form might grace the part
Of Ferragus or Ascart.*

These two sons of Anak flourished in romantic fable. The first is well known to the admirers of Ariosto, by the name of Ferrau. He was an antagonist of Orlando, and was at length slain by him in single combat.

Ascart, or Ascart, makes a very material figure in the History of Bevis of Hampton, by whom he was conquered. His effigies may be seen guarding one side of a gate at Southampton, while the other is occupied by Sir Bevis himself.

NOTE 9, page 255.

Though all unask'd his birth and name.

The Highlanders, who carried hospitality to a punctilious excess, are said to have considered it as churlish to ask a stranger his name or lineage, before he had taken refreshment. Feuds were so frequent among them, that a contrary rule would in many cases have produced the discovery of some circumstance, which might have excluded the guest of the benefit of the assistance he stood in need of.

NOTE 10, page 259.

Morn's genial influence roused a minstrel grey.

To a late period Highland chieftains retained in their service the bard, as a family officer.

NOTE 11, page 261.

—— the Græme.

The ancient and powerful family of Graham (which, for metrical reasons, is here spelt after the Scottish pronunciation) held extensive possessions in the counties of Dumbarton and Stirling. Few families can boast of more historical renown, having claim to three of the most remarkable characters in the Scottish annals. Sir John the Græme, the faithful and undaunted partaker of the labours and patriotic warfare of Wallace, fell in the unfortunate field of Falkirk, in 1298. The celebrated Marquis of Montrose, in whom De Retz saw realised his abstract idea of the heroes of antiquity, was the second of these worthies. And, notwithstanding the severity of his temper, and the rigour with which he executed the oppressive mandates of the princes whom he served, I do not hesitate to name as a third, John Græme of Claverhouse, Viscount of Dundee, whose heroic death in the arms of victory may be allowed to cancel the memory of his cruelty to the nonconformists, during the reigns of Charles II. and James II.

NOTE 12, page 261.

This harp, which erst Saint Modan sway'd.

I am not prepared to show that Saint Modan was a performer on the harp. It was, however, no unsaintly accomplishment; for Saint Dunstan certainly did play upon that instrument, which retaining, as was natural, a portion of the sanctity attached to its master's character, announced future events by its spontaneous sound.

NOTE 13, page 2 1.

*Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,
Were exil'd from their native heaven.*

The downfall of the Douglasses of the house of Angus during the reign of James V. is the event alluded to in the text.

NOTE 14, page 263.

In Holy-Rood a Knight he slew.

This was by no means an uncommon occurrence in the Court of Scotland; nay, the presence of the sovereign himself scarcely restrained the ferocious and inveterate feuds which were the perpetual source of bloodshed among the Scottish nobility. The murder of Sir William Stuart of Ochiltree, called *The Bloody*, by the celebrated Francis, Earl of Bothwell, may be named among many. See *Johnstoni Historia Rerum Britannicarum*, ab anno 1572 ad annum 1628. Amstelodami, 1655, fol. p. 135

NOTE 15, page 263.

*The Douglas, like a stricken deer,
Disown'd by every noble peer.*

The exiled state of this powerful race is not exaggerated in this and

subsequent passages. The hatred of James against the race of Douglas was so inveterate, that numerous as their allies were, and disregarded as the regal authority had usually been in similar cases, their nearest friends, even in the most remote parts of Scotland, durst not entertain them, unless under the strictest and closest disguise.

NOTE 16, page 264.

----- *Maronnan's cell.*

The parish of Kilmaronock, at the eastern extremity of Loch Lomond, derives its name from a cell or chapel, dedicated to Saint Maronock, or Maronock, or Maronnan, about whose sanctity very little is now remembered. There is a fountain devoted to him in the same parish; but its virtues, like the merits of its patron, have fallen into oblivion.

NOTE 17, page 264.

----- *Bracklinn's thundering wave.*

This is a beautiful cascade made by a mountain stream called the Keltie, at the Bridge of Bracklinn, about a mile from the village of Calander in Menteith.

NOTE 18, page 265.

For Tine-man forged by fairy lore.

Archibald, the third Earl of Douglas, was so unfortunate in all his enterprises, that he acquired the epithet of TINE-MAN, because he *tined*, or lost, his followers in every battle which he fought.

NOTE 19, page 265.

*Did, self-unscaubarded, foreshow
The footstep of a secret foe.*

The ancient warriors, whose hope and confidence rested chiefly in their blades, were accustomed to deduce omens from them, especially from such as were supposed to have been fabricated by enchanted skill, of which we have various instances in the romances and legends of the time.

NOTE 20, page 266.

*Those thrilling sounds that call the might
Of old Clan-Alpine to the fight.*

The connoisseurs in pipe-music affect to discover, in a well-composed pibroch, the imitative sounds of march, conflict, flight, pursuit, and all the "current of a heady fight."

NOTE 21, page 267.

Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! iero!

Besides his ordinary name and surname, which were chiefly used in the intercourse with the Lowlands, every Highland chief had an epithet expressive of his patriarchal dignity as head of the clan, and which was common to all his predecessors and successors, as Pharaoh to the kings of Egypt, or Arsaces to those of Parthia. This name was usually a patronymic, expressive of his descent from the founder of the family. Thus the Duke of Argyll is called MacCallum More, or the son of Colin the Great.

NOTE 22, page 276

And while the Fiery Cross glanced, like a meteor, round.

When a chieftain designed to summon his clan, upon any sudden or important emergency, he slew a goat, and making a cross of any light wood, seared its extremities in the fire, and extinguished them in the blood of the

animal. This was called the *Fiery Cross*, also *Crean Tarigh*, or the *Cross of Shame*, because disobedience to what the symbol implied, inferred infamy. It was delivered to a swift and trusty messenger, who ran full speed with it to the next hamlet, where he presented it to the principal person, with a single word, implying the place of rendezvous. He who received the symbol was bound to send it forward, with equal dispatch, to the next village; and thus it passed with incredible celerity through all the district which owed allegiance to the chief, and also among his allies and neighbours, if the danger was common to them. At sight of the Fiery Cross, every man, from sixteen years old to sixty, capable of bearing arms, was obliged instantly to repair, in his best arms and accoutrements, to the place of rendezvous. He who failed to appear, suffered the extremities of fire and sword, which were emblematically denounced to the disobedient by the bloody and burnt marks upon this warlike signal. During the civil war of 1745-6, the Fiery Cross often made its circuit; and upon one occasion it passed through the whole district of Breadalbane, a tract of thirty-two miles, in three hours.

NOTE 23, page 278.

That monk, of savage form and face.

The state of religion in the middle ages afforded considerable facilities for those whose mode of life excluded them from regular worship, to secure, nevertheless, the ghostly assistance of confessors, perfectly willing to adapt the nature of their doctrine to the necessities and peculiar circumstances of their flock. Robin Hood, it is well known, had his celebrated domestic chaplain, Friar Tuck.

NOTE 24, page 278.

Of Brian's birth strange tales were told.

The legend which follows is not of the author's invention. It is possible he may differ from modern critics, in supposing that the records of human superstition, if peculiar to, and characteristic of, the country in which the scene is laid, are a legitimate subject of poetry. He gives, however, a ready assent to the narrower proposition which condemns all attempts of an irregular and disordered fancy to excite terror, by accumulating a train of fantastic and incoherent horrors, whether borrowed from all countries, and patched upon a narrative belonging to one which knew them not, or derived from the author's own imagination. In the present case, therefore, I appeal to the record which I have transcribed, with the variation of a very few words, from the geographical collections made by the Laird of Macfarlane. I know not whether it be necessary to remark, that the miscellaneous concourse of youths and maidens on the night and on the spot where the miracle is said to have taken place, might, even in a credulous age, have somewhat diminished the wonder which accompanied the conception of Gilli-Doir-Magrevollich.

"There is bot two myles from Iverloghie, the church of Kilmaloe, in Lochyeld. In ancient tymes there was ane church builded upon ane hill, which was above this church, which doeth now stand in this toune; and ancient men doeth say, that there was a battell foughten on ane lile hill not the tenth part of a myle from this church, be certane men which they did not know what they were. And long tyme thereafter, certaine herds of that toune, and of the next toune, called Unnatt, both wenches and youthe, did on a tyme convene with others on that hill; and the day being somewhat cold, did gather the bones of the dead men that were slayne long tyme before in that place, and did make a fire to warm them. At last they did all remove from the fire, except one maid or wench, which was verie cold, and she did remaine there for a space. She being quyetlie her alone, without anie other companie, took up her cloaths above her knees, or thereby, to warm her; a wind did come and casie the ashes upon her, and she was conceived of ane man-child. Several tymes thereafter she was verie sick, and at last she was knowne to be with child. And then her parents did ask at her the matter heiroff, which the wench could not weel answer which way to satisfie them. At last she resolved them with ane answer. As fortune fell upon her concerning this marvelous miracle, the chylid being borne, his name was called *Gilli-Doir Maghre wille*, that is to say, the *Black Child, Son to the Bone*. So called, his grandfather sent him to school, and so he was a good schollar, and godlie. He did build this church which doeth now stand in Lochyeld, called Kilmaloe."—*Macfarlane*, *ut supra*, ii. 168.

NOTE 25, page 278.

*Yet ne'er again to braid her hair
The virgin snood did Alice wear.*

The *snood*, or riband, with which a Scottish lass braided her hair, had

an emblematical signification, and applied to her maiden character. It was exchanged for the *curch, toy*, or coil, when she passed, by marriage, into the matron state. But if the damsel was so unfortunate as to lose pretensions to the name of maiden, without gaining a right to that of matron, she was neither permitted to use the snood, nor advanced to the graver dignity of the curch. In old Scottish songs there occur many sly allusions to such misfortune; as in the old words to the popular tune of "Ower the muir amang the heather."

* Down amang the broom, the broom,
Down amang the broom, my dearie,
The lassie lost her silken snood
That gaird her greet till she was wearie."

NOTE 26, page 279.

The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream.

Most great families in the Highlands were supposed to have a tutelair, or rather a domestic spirit, attached to them, who took an interest in their prosperity, and intimated, by its wailings, any approaching disaster. A superstition of the same kind is, I believe, universally received by the inferior ranks of the native Irish.

NOTE 27, page 280.

*Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast,
Of charging steeds careering fast
Along Benharrow's shingly side,
Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride.*

A presage of the kind alluded to in the text, is still believed to announce death to the ancient Highland family of M'Lean of Lochbuy. The spirit of an ancestor slain in battle is heard to gallop along a stony bank, and then to ride thrice around the family residence, ringing his fairy bridle, and thus intimating the approaching calamity.

NOTE 28, page 282.

—— *the dun deer's hide
On fleeter foot was never tied.*

The present *brogue* of the Highlanders is made of half-dried leather with holes to admit and let out the water; for walking the moors dry-shod is a matter altogether out of the question. The ancient buskin was still ruder, being made of undressed deer's hide, with the hair outwards; a circumstance which procured the Highlanders the well-known epithet of *Red-shanks*.

NOTE 29, page 283.

The dismal coronach.

The *Coronach* of the Highlanders, like the *Ulatatus* of the Romans, and the *Uuloo* of the Irish, was a wild expression of lamentation, poured forth by the mourners over the body of a departed friend. When the words of it were articulate, they expressed the praises of the deceased, and the loss the clan would sustain by his death.

NOTE 30, page 288.

*Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,
Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze.*

It may be necessary to inform the southern reader, that the heath on the Scottish moorlands is often set fire to, that the sheep may have the advantage of the young herbage produced, in room of the tough old heather plants. This custom (execrated by sportsmen) produces occasionally the most beautiful nocturnal appearances, similar almost to the discharge of a volcano. This simile is not new to poetry. The charge of a warrior, in the fine ballad of *Hardyknute*, is said to be "like fire to heather set."

NOTE 31, page 289.

*By many a bard in Celtic tongue,
Has Coir-nan-Uriskin been sung.*

This is a very steep and most romantic hollow in the mountain of Benvenue, overhanging the south-eastern extremity of Loch Katrine. It is surrounded with stupendous rocks, and overshadowed with birch-trees, mingled with oaks, the spontaneous production of the mountain, even where its cliffs appear denuded of soil.

NOTE 32, page 293.

*The Taghairm called; by which, afar,
Our sires foresaw the events of war.*

The Highlanders, like all rude people, had various superstitious modes of inquiring into futurity. One of the most noted was the *Taghairm*, mentioned in the text. A person was wrapped up in the skin of a newly-slain bullock, and deposited beside a waterfall, or at the bottom of a precipice, or in some other strange, wild, and unusual situation, where the scenery around him suggested nothing but objects of horror. In this situation, he revolved in his mind the question proposed; and whatever was impressed upon him by his exalted imagination, passed for the inspiration of the disembodied spirits, who haunt the desolate recesses.

NOTE 33, page 294.

*—that huge cliff, whose ample verge
Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.*

There is a rock so named in the Forest of Glenfinlas, by which a tumultuary cataract takes its course. This wild place is said in former times to have afforded refuge to an outlaw, who was supplied with provisions by a woman, who lowered them down from the brink of the precipice above. His water he procured for himself, by letting down a flagon tied to a string, into the black pool beneath the fall.

NOTE 34, page 295.

*Which spills the foremost foeman's life.
That party conquers in the strife.*

Though this be in the text described as a response of the Taghairm, or Oracle of the Hide, it was of itself an augury frequently attended to. The fate of the battle was often anticipated in the imagination of the combatants, by observing which party first shed blood. It is said that the Highlanders under Montrose were so deeply imbued with this notion, that, on the morning of the battle of Tippermoor, they murdered a defenceless herdsman, whom they found in the fields, merely to secure an advantage of so much consequence to their party.

NOTE 35, page 298.

*Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,
Our moonlight circle's screen?
Or who comes here to chase the deer,
Beloved of our Elfin Queen?*

Fairies, if not positively malevolent, are capricious, and easily offended. Like other proprietors of forests, they are peculiarly jealous of their rights of *vert* and *venison*. This jealousy was also an attribute of the northern *Duergar*, or dwarfs; to many of whose distinctions the fairies seem to have succeeded, if, indeed, they are not the same class of beings.

NOTE 36, page 298.

*—who may dare on wold to wear
The fairies' fatal green?*

As the *Daoine Shi'* or Men of Peace, wore green habits, they were sup-

posed to take offence when any mortals ventured to assume their favourite colour. Indeed, from some reason which has been, perhaps, originally a general superstition, *green* is held in Scotland to be unlucky to particular tribes and counties. The Caithness men, who hold this belief, allege as a reason, that their bands wore that colour when they were cut off at the battle of Flodden; and for the same reason they avoid crossing the Ord on a Monday, being the day of the week on which their ill-omened array set forth. Green is also disliked by those of the name of Ogilvy; but more especially is it held fatal to the whole clan of Grahame. It is remembered of an aged gentleman of that name, that when his horse fell in a fox-chase, he accounted for it at once by observing, that the whipcord attached to his lash was of this unlucky colour.

NOTE 37, page 299.

For thou wert christen'd man.

The elves were supposed greatly to envy the privileges acquired by Christian initiation, and they gave to those mortals who had fallen into their power a certain precedence, founded upon this advantageous distinction. Tamlane, in the old ballad, describes his own rank in the fairy procession:—

"For I ride on a milk-white steed,
And aye nearest the town;
Because I was a christen'd knight,
They gave me that renown."

NOTE 38, page 308.

*Who ever reck'd, where, how, or when,
The prowling fox was trapp'd or slain?*

St John actually used this illustration when engaged in confuting the plea of law proposed for the unfortunate Earl of Strafford: "It was true, we gave laws to hares and deer, because they are beasts of chase; but it was never accounted either cruelty or foul play to knock foxes or wolves on the head as they can be found, because they are beasts of prey. In a word, the law and humanity were alike; the one being more fallacious, and the other more barbarous, than in any age had been vented in such an authority."—*Clarendon's History of the Rebellion*. Oxford, 1702, fol. vol. p. 183.

NOTE 39, page 308.

*— his Highland cheer,
The harden'd flesh of mountain-deer.*

The Scottish Highlanders in former times, had a concise mode of cooking their venison, or rather of dispensing with cooking it, which appears greatly to have surprised the French whom chance made acquainted with it. The Vidame of Charters, when a hostage in England, during the reign of Edward VI., was permitted to travel into Scotland, and penetrated as far as to the remote Highlands (*au fin fond des Sauvages*). After a great hunting party, at which a most wonderful quantity of game was destroyed, he saw these *Scottish Savages* devour a part of their venison raw, without any farther preparation than compressing it between two batons of wood, so as to force out the blood, and render it extremely hard. This they reckoned a great delicacy; and when the Vidame partook of it, his compliance with their taste rendered him extremely popular.

NOTE 40, page 311.

*Not then claim'd sovereignty his due
While Albany, with feeble hand,
Held borrow'd truncheon of command.*

There is scarcely a more disorderly period in Scottish history than that which succeeded the battle of Flodden, and occupied the minority of James V. Feuds of ancient standing broke out like old wounds, and every quarrel among the independent nobility, which occurred daily, and almost hourly, gave rise to fresh bloodshed.

NOTE 41, page 314.

*I only meant
To show the reed on which you leant,
Deeming this path you might pursue
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.*

This incident, like some other passages in the poem, illustrative of the character of the ancient Gael, is not imaginary, but borrowed from fact. The Highlanders, with the inconsistency of most nations in the same state, were alternately capable of great exertions of generosity, and of cruel revenge and perfidy.

NOTE 42, page 315.

*On Bochart the mouldering lines,
Where Rome, the Empress of the world,
Of yore her eagle-wings unfurl'd.*

The torrent which discharges itself from Loch Vennachar, the lowest and eastmost of the three lakes which form the scenery adjoining to the Trosachs, sweeps through a flat and extensive moor, called Bochart. Upon a small eminence, called the *Dun* of Bochart, and indeed on the plain itself, are some intrenchments, which have been thought Roman. There is, adjacent to Callander, a sweet villa, the residence of Captain Fairfoul, entitled the Roman Camp.

NOTE 43, page 315.

*See, here, all vantageless I stand,
Arm'd, like thyself, with single brand.*

The duellists of former times did not always stand upon those punctilios respecting equality of arms, which are now judged essential to fair combat. It is true, that in former combats in the lists, the parties were, by the judges of the field, put as nearly as possible in the same circumstances. But in private duel it was often otherwise.

NOTE 44, page 316.

*Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
That on the field his targe he threw.*

A round target of light wood, covered with strong leather, and studded with brass or iron, was a necessary part of a Highlander's equipment. In charging regular troops, they received the thrust of the bayonet in this buckler, twisted it aside, and used the broad-sword against the encumbered soldier. In the civil war of 1745, most of the front rank of the clans were thus armed: and Captain Grose informs us, that, in 1747, the privates of the 42d regiment, then in Flanders, were, for the most part, permitted to carry targets.—*Military Antiquities*, vol. I. p. 164.

NOTE 45, page 320.

The burghers hold their sports to-day.

Every burgh of Scotland, of the least note, but more especially the considerable towns, had their solemn *play*, or festival, when feats of archery were exhibited, and prizes distributed to those who excelled in wrestling, hurling the bar, and the other gymnastic exercises of the period. Stirling, a usual place of royal residence, was not likely to be deficient in pomp upon such occasions, especially since James V. was very partial to them. His ready participation in these popular amusements was one cause of his acquiring the title of King of the Commons, or *Rex Plebeiorum*, as Lesley has latinized it. The usual prize to the best shooter was a silver arrow. Such a one is preserved at Selkirk and at Peebles.

NOTE 46, page 321.

Robin Hood.

The exhibition of this renowned outlaw and his band was a favourite

frolic at such festivals as we are describing. This sporting, in which kings did not disdain to be actors, was prohibited in Scotland upon the Reformation, by a statute of the 6th Parliament of Queen Mary, c. 61, A.D. 1555, which ordered, under heavy penalties, that "na manner of person be chosen Robert Hude, nor Little John, Abbot of Unreason, Queen of May, nor otherwise." But in 1561, the "rascal multitude," says John Knox, "were stirred up to make a Robin Hude, whilk enormity was of many years left and damned by statute and act of Parliament; yet would they not be forbidden." Accordingly, they raised a very serious tumult, and at length made prisoners the magistrates who endeavoured to suppress it, and would not release them till they extorted a formal promise that no one should be punished for his share of the disturbance. It would seem, from the complaints of the General Assembly of the Kirk, that these profane festivities were continued down to 1592.

NOTE 47, page 321.

*Prize of the wrestling match, the King
To Douglas gave a golden ring.*

The usual prize of a wrestling was a ram and a ring, but the animal would have embarrassed my story. Thus, in the Cokes Tale of Gamelyn, ascribed to Chaucer:

"There happed to be there beside
Tried a wrestling;
And therefore there was y-setten
A ram and als a ring."

NOTE 48, page 328.

*These drew not for their fields the sword,
Like tenants of a feudal lord,
Nor owned the patriarchal claim
Of Chieftain in their leader's name;
Adventurers they* ———

The Scottish armies consisted chiefly of the nobility and barons, with their vassals, who held lands under them, for military service by themselves and their tenants. The patriarchal influence exercised by the heads of clans in the Highlands and Borders was of a different nature, and sometimes at variance with feudal principles. It flowed from the *Patria Potestas*, exercised by the chieftain as representing the original father of the whole name, and was often obeyed in contradiction to the feudal superior.

NOTE 49, page 329.

*Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp!
Get thee an ape, and trudge the land,
The leader of a juggler band.*

The jongleurs, or jugglers, used to call in the aid of various assistants, to render these performances as captivating as possible. The glee-maiden was a necessary attendant. Her duty was tumbling and dancing; and therefore the Anglo-Saxon version of Saint Mark's Gospel states Herodias to have vaulted or tumbled before King Herod.

NOTE 50, page 334.

*That stirring air that peals on high,
O'er Dermid's race our victory.—
Strike it!*

There are several instances, at least in tradition, of persons so much attached to particular tunes, as to require to hear them on their death-bed. Such an anecdote is mentioned by the late Mr Riddell of Glenriddel, in his collection of Border tunes, respecting an air called the "Dandling of the Bairns," for which a certain Gallovidian laird is said to have evinced this strong mark of partiality. It is popularly told of a famous freebooter, that

he composed the tune known by the name of Macpherson's Rant, while under sentence of death, and played it at the gallows-tree. Some spirited words have been adapted to it by Burns. A similar story is recounted of a Welsh bard, who composed and played on his death-bed the air called *Dafydd Garreg Wen*.

NOTE 51, page 334.

Battle of Beal' an Duine.

A skirmish actually took place at a pass thus called in the Trosachs, and closed with the remarkable incident mentioned in the text. It was greatly posterior in date to the reign of James V.

NOTE 52, page 341.

And Snowdon's Knight is Scotland's King.

This discovery will probably remind the reader of the beautiful Arabian tale of *Al-Bondocani*. Yet the incident is not borrowed from that elegant story, but from Scottish tradition. James V., of whom we are treating, was a monarch whose good and benevolent intentions often rendered his romantic freaks venial, if not respectable, since, from his anxious attention to the interests of the lower and most oppressed class of his subjects, he was, as we have seen, popularly termed the *King of the Commons*. For the purpose of seeing that justice was regularly administered, and frequently from the less justifiable motive of gallantry, he used to traverse the vicinage of his several palaces in various disguises. The two excellent comic songs, entitled, "the Gaberlunzie man," and "We'll gae nae mair a roving," are said to have been founded upon the success of his amorous adventures when travelling in the disguise of a beggar. The latter is perhaps the best comic ballad in any language.

NOTE 53, page 342.

*Stirling's tower
Of yore the name of Snowdon claims.*

William of Worcester, who wrote about the middle of the fifteenth century, calls Stirling Castle Snowdon. Sir David Lindsay bestows the same epithet upon it in his complaint of the Papingo:—

"Adieu, fair Snawdown, with thy towers high,
Thy chaple-royal, park, and table round;
May, June, and July, would I dwell in thee,
Were I a man, to hear the birdie sound,
Whilk doth againe thy royal rock rebound."

NOTES

TO

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK.

NOTE 1. page 350.

*And Cattraeth's glens with voice of triumph rung,
And mystic Merlin harp'd, and grey-hair'd Llynearch sung?*

THIS locality may startle those readers who do not recollect that much of the ancient poetry preserved in Wales refers less to the history of the Principality to which that name is now limited, than to events which happened in the north-west of England, and south-west of Scotland, where the Britons for a long time made a stand against the Saxons. The battle of Cattraeth, lamented by the celebrated Ancurin, is supposed, by the learned Dr Leyden, to have been fought on the skirts of Ettrick Forest. It is known to the English reader by the paraphrase of Gray, beginning,

"Had I but the torrent's might,
With headlong rage and wild affright," &c.

NOTE 2, page 350.

— *Minchmore's haunted spring.*

A belief in the existence and nocturnal revels of the faeries still lingers among the vulgar in Selkirkshire. A copious fountain upon the ridge of Minchmore, called the Cheesewell, is supposed to be sacred to these fanciful spirits, and it was customary to propitiate them by throwing in something upon passing it. A pin was the usual oblation; and the ceremony is still sometimes practised, though rather in jest than earnest.

NOTE 3, page 351.

— *the rude villager, his labour done,
In verse spontaneous chants some favour'd name.*

The flexibility of the Italian and Spanish languages, and perhaps the liveliness of their genius, renders these countries distinguished for the talent of improvisation, which is found even among the lowest of the people. It is mentioned by Baretti and other travellers.

NOTE 4, page 351.

— *kindling at the deeds of Græme.*

I have used the freedom, here and elsewhere, to alter the orthography of the name of my gallant countryman, in order to apprise the Southern reader of its legitimate sound;—Grahame being, on the other side of the Tweed, usually pronounced as a dissyllable.

NOTE 5, page 352.

*What! will Don Roderick here till morning stay.
To wear in shirt and prayer the night away!
And are his hours in such dull penance past
For fair Florinda's plunder'd charms to pay?*

Almost all the Spanish historians, as well as the voice of tradition, as-

cribe the invasion of the Moors to the forcible violation committed by Roderick upon Florinda, called by the Moors, Caba or Cava. She was the daughter of Count Julian, one of the Gothic monarch's principal lieutenants, who, when the crime was perpetrated, was engaged in the defence of Ceuta against the Moors. In his indignation at the ingratitude of his sovereign, and the dishonour of his daughter, Count Julian forgot the duties of a Christian and a patriot, and, forming an alliance with Musa, then the Caliph's lieutenant in Africa, he countenanced the invasion of Spain by a body of Saracens and Africans, commanded by the celebrated Tarik; the issue of which was the defeat and death of Roderick, and the occupation of almost the whole peninsula by the Moors.

NOTE 6, page 355.

The Tecbir war-cry and the Lellie's yell.

The Tecbir (derived from the words *Alla achar*, God is most mighty) was the original war-cry of the Saracens. It is celebrated by Hughes in the *Siege of Damascus*:—

"We heard the Tecbir; so these Arabs call
Their shout of onset, when with loud appeal,
They challenge Heaven, as if demanding conquest.

The *Lellie*, well known to the Christians during the crusades, is the shout of *Alla illa Alla*, the Mahomedan confession of faith. It is twice used in poetry by my friend Mr W. Stewart Rose, in the romance of *Parthenopex*, and in the *Crusade of St Lewis*

NOTE 7, page 356.

By Heaven, the Moors prevail! the Christians yield!—

Their coward leader gives for flight the sign!

The sceptred craven mounts to quit the field—

Is not yon steed Orelia?—Yes, 'tis mine!

Count Julian, the father of the injured Florinda, with the connivance and assistance of Oppas, Archbishop of Toledo, invited, in 713, the Saracens into Spain. A considerable army arrived under the command of Tarik, or Tarif, who bequeathed the well-known name of Gibraltar (*Gibet al Tarik*, or the mountain of Tarik,) to the place of his landing. He was joined by Count Julian, ravaged Andalusia, and took Seville. In 714, they returned with a still greater force, and Roderick marched into Andalusia at the head of a great army, to give them battle. The field was chosen near Xeres.

NOTE 8, page 358.

*When for the light bolero ready stand,
The mozo blithe, with gay muchacha met.*

The bolero is a very light and active dance, much practised by the Spaniards, in which castenets are always used. *Moz*, and *muchacha* are equivalent to our phrase of lad and lass.

NOTE 9, page 360.

While trumpets rang, and heralds cried "Castile!"

The heralds, at the coronation of a Spanish monarch, proclaim his name three times, and repeat three times the word "*Castilla, Castilla, Castilla!*" which, with all other ceremonies, was carefully copied in the mock inauguration of Joseph Bonaparte

NOTE 10, page 361.

High blazed the war, and long, and far, and wide.

Those who were disposed to believe that mere virtue and energy are able of themselves to work forth the salvation of an oppressed people, surprised in a moment of confidence, deprived of their officers, armies, and fortresses, who had every means of resistance to seek in the very moment

when they were to be made use of, and whom the numerous treasons among the higher orders deprived of confidence in their natural leaders,—those who entertained this enthusiastic but delusive opinion may be pardoned for expressing their disappointment at the protracted warfare in the Peninsula. There are, however, another class of persons, who, having themselves the highest dread or veneration, or something allied to both, for the power of the modern Attila, will nevertheless give the heroic Spaniards little or no credit for the long, stubborn, and unsubdued resistance of three years to a power before whom their former well-prepared, well-armed, and numerous adversaries fell in the course of as many months. While these gentlemen plead for deference to Bonaparte, and crave

"Respect for his great place, and bid the devil
Be duly honour'd for his burning throne,"

it may not be altogether unreasonable to claim some modification of censure upon those who have been long and to a great extent successfully resisting this great enemy of mankind. That the energy of Spain has not uniformly been directed by conduct equal to its vigour, has been too obvious; that her armies, under their complicated disadvantages, have shared the fate of such as were defeated after taking the field with every possible advantage of arms and discipline, is surely not to be wondered at. But that a nation, under the circumstances of repeated discomfiture, internal treason, and the mismanagement incident to a temporary and hastily adopted government, should have wasted, by its stubborn, uniform, and prolonged resistance, myriads after myriads of those soldiers who had overrun the world—that some of its provinces should, like Galicia, after being abandoned by their allies, and overrun by their enemies, have recovered their freedom by their own unassisted exertions; that others, like Catalonia, undismayed by the treason which betrayed some fortresses, and the force which subdued others, should not only have continued their resistance, but have attained over their victorious enemy a superiority, which is even now enabling them to besiege and retake the places of strength which had been wrested from them, is a tale hitherto untold in the revolutionary war. To say that such a people cannot be subdued, would be presumption similar to that of those who protested that Spain could not defend herself for a year, or Portugal for a month; but that a resistance which has been continued for so long a space, when the usurper, except during the short-lived Austrian campaign, had no other enemies on the Continent, should be now less successful, when repeated defeats have broken the reputation of the French armies, and when they are likely (it would seem almost in desperation) to seek occupation elsewhere, is a prophecy as improbable as ungracious.

NOTE 11, page 362.

They won not Zaragoza, but her children's bloody tomb.

The interesting account of Mr Vaughan has made most readers acquainted with the first siege of Zaragoza.¹ The last and fatal siege of that gallant and devoted city is detailed with great eloquence and precision in the "Edinburgh Annual Register" for 1809—a work in which the affairs of Spain have been treated of with attention corresponding to their deep interest, and to the peculiar sources of information open to the historian. The following are a few brief extracts from this splendid historical narrative:—

"A breach was soon made in the mud walls, and then, as in the former siege, the war was carried on in the streets and houses; but the French had been taught by experience, that in this species of warfare the Zaragozans derived a superiority from the feeling and principle which inspired them, and the cause for which they fought. The only means of conquering Zaragoza was to destroy it house by house, and street by street; and upon this system of destruction they proceeded. Three companies of miners, and eight companies of sappers, carried on this subterraneous war; the Spaniards, it is said, attempted to oppose them by countermines; these were operations to which they were wholly unused, and, according to the French statement, their miners were every day discovered and suffocated. Meantime, the bombardment was incessantly kept up. 'Within the last 48 hours,' said Painsfox in a letter to his friend General Doyle, '6000 shells have been thrown in. Two-thirds of the town are in ruins, but we shall perish under the ruins of the remaining third rather than surrender.' In the

¹ See Narrative of the Siege of Zaragoza, by Richard Charles Vaughan, Esq., 1803. The Right Honourable R. C. Vaughan is now British Minister at Washington, 1833.

course of the siege, above 17,000 bombs were thrown at the town; the stock of powder with which Zaragoza had been stored was exhausted; they had none at last but what they manufactured day by day; and no other cannon-balls than those which were shot into the town, and which they collected and fired back upon the enemy."

In the midst of these horrors and privations, the pestilence broke out in Zaragoza. To various causes, enumerated by the annalist, he adds, "scantiness of food, crowded quarters, unusual exertion of body, anxiety of mind, and the impossibility of recruiting their exhausted strength by needful rest, in a city which was almost incessantly bombarded, and where every hour their sleep was broken by the tremendous explosion of mines. There was now no respite, either by day or night, for this devoted city; even the natural order of light and darkness was destroyed in Zaragoza; by day it was involved in a red sulphureous atmosphere of smoke, which hid the face of heaven; by night the fire of cannons and mortars, and the flames of burning houses, kept it in a state of terrific illumination.

"When once the pestilence had begun, it was impossible to check its progress, or confine it to one quarter of the city. Hospitals were immediately established,—there were above thirty of them; as soon as one was destroyed by the bombardment, the patients were removed to another, and thus the infection was carried to every part of Zaragoza. Famine aggravated the evil; the city had probably not been sufficiently provided at the commencement of the siege, and of the provisions which it contained, much was destroyed in the daily ruin which the mines and bombs effected. Had the Zaragozans and their garrison proceeded according to military rules, they would have surrendered before the end of January; their batteries had then been demolished, there were open breaches in many parts of their weak walls, and the enemy were already within the city. On the 30th, above sixty houses were blown up, and the French obtained possession of the monasteries of the Augustines and Las Monjas, which adjoined each other, two of the last defensible places left. The enemy forced their way into the church; every column, every chapel, every altar, became a point of defence, which was repeatedly attacked, taken, and retaken; the pavement was covered with blood, the aisles and body of the church strewed with the dead, who were trampled under foot by the combatants. In the midst of this conflict, the roof, shattered by repeated bombs, fell in; the few who were not crushed, after a short pause, which this tremendous shock, and their own unexpected escape, occasioned, renewed the fight with rekindled fury: fresh parties of the enemy poured in; monks, and citizens, and soldiers, came to the defence, and the contest was continued upon the ruins, and the bodies of the dead and the dying."

Yet, seventeen days after sustaining these extremities, did the heroic inhabitants of Zaragoza continue their defence, nor did they then surrender until their despair had extracted from the French generals a capitulation, more honourable than has been granted to fortresses of the first order.

Who shall venture to refuse the Zaragozans the eulogium conferred upon them by the eloquence of Wordsworth!—"Most gloriously have the citizens of Zaragoza proved that the true army of Spain, in a contest of this nature, is the whole people. The same city has also exemplified a melancholy, yea, a dismal truth,—yet consolatory and full of joy,—that when a people are called suddenly to fight for their liberty, and are sorely pressed upon, their best field of battle is the floors upon which their children have played; the chambers where the family of each man has slept, (his own or his neighbours'); upon or under the roofs by which they have been sheltered; in the gardens of their recreation; in the street, or in the market-place; before the altars of their temples, and among their congregated dwellings, blazing or uprooted.

"The government of Spain must never forget Zaragoza for a moment. Nothing is wanting to produce the same effects everywhere, but a leading mind, such as that city was blessed with. In the latter contest this has been proved; for Zaragoza contained, at that time, bodies of men from almost all parts of Spain. The narrative of these two sieges should be the manual of every Spaniard. He may add to it the ancient stories of Numantia and Saguntum; let him sleep upon the book as a pillow, and if he be a devout adherent to the religion of his country, let him wear it in his bosom for his crucifix to rest upon."—*Wordsworth on the Convention of Cintra.*

NOTE 12, page 364.

The Vault of Destiny.

Before finally dismissing the enchanted cavern of Don Roderick, it may be noticed, that the legend occurs in one of Calderon's plays, entitled, *La Virgen del Sagrario*. The scene opens with the noise of the chase, and Reclisundo, a predecessor of Roderick upon the Gothic throne, enters pursuing a stag. The animal assumes the form of a man, and defies the king to enter the cave, which forms the bottom of the scene, and engage with him in single combat. The king accepts the challenge, and they engage accordingly, but without advantage on either side, which induces the Genie

to inform Recisundo, that he is not the monarch for whom the adventure of the enchanted cavern is reserved, and he proceeds to predict the downfall of the Gothic monarchy, and of the Christian religion, which shall attend the discovery of its mysteries. Recisundo, appalled by these prophecies, orders the cavern to be secured by a gate and bolts of iron. In the second part of the same play, we are informed that Don Roderick had removed the barrier, and transgressed the prohibition of his ancestor, and had been apprised by the prodigies which he discovered of the approaching ruin of his kingdom.

NOTE 13, page 365.

*While downward on the land his legions press,
Before them it was rich with vine and flock,
And smiled like Eden in her summer dress ;—
Behind their wasteful march, a reeking wilderness.*

I have ventured to apply to the movements of the French army that sublime passage in the prophesies of Joel, which seems applicable to them in more respects than that I have adopted in the text. One would think their ravages, their military appointments, the terror which they spread among invaded nations, their military discipline, their arts of political intrigue and deceit, were distinctly pointed out in the following verses of Scripture:—

"2. A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong, there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. 3. A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness, yea, and nothing shall escape them. 4. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses and as horsemen, so shall they run. 5. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains, shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. 6. Before their face shall the people be much pained; all faces shall gather blackness. 7. They shall run like mighty men, they shall climb the wall like men of warre, and they shall march every one in his ways, and they shall not break their ranks. 8. Neither shall one thrust another, they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. 9. They shall run to and fro in the cities; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses: they shall enter in at the windows like a thief. 10. The earth shall quake before them, the heavens shall tremble, the sunne and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining."

In verse 20th also, which announces the retreat of the northern army, described in such dreadful colours, into a "land barren and desolate," and the dishonour with which God afflicted them for having "magnified themselves to do great things," there are particulars not inapplicable to the retreat of Massena;—Divine Providence having, in all ages, attached disgrace as the natural punishment of cruelty and presumption.

NOTE 14, page 366.

*The rudest sentinel, in Britain born,
With horror paused to view the havoc done,
Gave his poor crust to feed some wretch forlorn.*

Even the unexampled gallantry of the British army in the campaign of 1810-11, although they never fought but to conquer, will do them less honour in history than their humanity, attentive to soften to the utmost of their power the horrors which war, in its mildest aspect, must always inflict upon the defenceless inhabitants of the country in which it is waged, and which, on this occasion, were tenfold augmented by the barbarous cruelties of the French. Soup-kitchens were established by subscription among the officers, wherever the troops were quartered for any length of time. The commissaries contributed the heads, feet, &c. of the cattle slaughtered for the soldiery; rice, vegetables, and bread, where it could be had, were purchased by the officers. Fifty or sixty starving peasants were daily fed at one of these regimental establishments, and carried home the relics to their famished households. The emaciated wretches, who could not crawl from weakness, were speedily employed in pruning their vines. While pursuing Massena, the soldiers evinced the same spirit of humanity. Is it possible to know such facts without feeling a sort of confidence, that

those who so well deserve victory are most likely to attain it?—It is not the least of Lord Wellington's military merits, that the slightest disposition towards marauding meets immediate punishment. Independently of all moral obligation, the army which is most orderly in a friendly country, has always proved most formidable to an armed enemy.

NOTE 15, page 366.

Fainglorious-fugitive!

The French conducted this memorable retreat with much of the *fanfaronade* proper to their country, by which they attempt to impose upon others, and perhaps on themselves, a belief that they are triumphing in the very moment of their discomfiture. On the 30th March 1811, their rear-guard was overtaken near Pega by the British cavalry. Being well posted, and conceiving themselves safe from infantry, (who were indeed many miles in the rear,) and from artillery, they indulged themselves in parading their bands of music, and actually performed "God save the King." Their minstrelsy was, however, deranged by the undesired accompaniment of the British horse-artillery, on whose part in the concert they had not calculated. The surprise was sudden, and the rout complete; for the artillery and cavalry did execution upon them for about four miles, pursuing at the gallop as often as they got beyond the range of the guns.

NOTE 16, page 367.

*Vainly thy squadrons hide Assuava's plain,
And front the flying thunders as they roar,
With frantic charge and tenfold odds, in vain!*

In the severe action of Fuentes d' Honoro, upon 5th May 1811, the grand mass of the French cavalry attacked the right of the British position, covered by two guns of the horse-artillery, and two squadrons of cavalry. After suffering considerably from the fire of the guns, which annoyed them in every attempt at formation, the enemy turned their wrath entirely towards them, distributed brandy among their troopers, and advanced to carry the field-pieces with the desperation of drunken fury. They were in no wise checked by the heavy loss which they sustained in this daring attempt, but closed, and fairly mingled with the British cavalry, to whom they bore the proportion of ten to one. Captain Ramsay, (let me be permitted to name a gallant countryman,) who commanded the two guns, dismissed them at the gallop, and putting himself at the head of the mounted artillerymen, ordered them to fall upon the French, sabre-in-hand. This very unexpected conversion of artillerymen into dragoons, contributed greatly to the defeat of the enemy, already disconcerted by the reception they had met from the two British squadrons; and the appearance of some small reinforcements, notwithstanding the immense disproportion of force, put them to absolute rout. A colonel or major of their cavalry, and many prisoners, (almost all intoxicated,) remained in our possession. Those who consider for a moment the difference of the services, and how much an artilleryman is necessarily and naturally led to identify his own safety and utility with abiding by the tremendous implement of war, to the exercise of which he is chiefly, if not exclusively, trained, will know how to estimate the presence of mind which commanded so bold a manœuvre, and the steadiness and confidence with which it was executed.

NOTE 17, page 367.

*And what avails thee that, for Cameron slain,
Wild from his plaided ranks the yell was given.*

The gallant Colonel Cameron was wounded mortally during the desperate contest in the streets of the village called Fuentes d' Honoro. He fell at the head of his native Highlanders, the 71st and 79th, who raised a dreadful shriek of grief and rage. They charged, with irresistible fury, the finest body of French grenadiers ever seen, being a part of Bonaparte's selected guard. The officer who led the French, a man remarkable for

stature and symmetry, was killed on the spot. The Frenchman who stepped out of his rank to take aim at Colonel Cameron was also bayoneted, pierced with a thousand wounds, and almost torn to pieces by the furious Highlanders, who, under the command of Colonel Cadogan, bore the enemy out of the contested ground at the point of the bayonet. Massena pays my countrymen a singular compliment in his account of the attack and defence of this village, in which he says the British lost many officers. *and Scotch.*

NOTE 18, page 367.

*O who shall grudge him Albuerca's bays,
Who brought a race regenerate to the field,
Roused them to emulate their father's praise,
Temper'd their headlong rage, their courage steel'd,
And raised fair Lusitania's fallen shield.*

Nothing during the war of Portugal seems, to a distinct observer, more deserving of praise, than the self-devotion of Field-Marshal Beresford, who was contented to undertake all the hazard of obloquy which might have been founded upon any miscarriage in the highly important experiment of training the Portuguese troops to an improved state of discipline. In exposing his military reputation to the censure of imprudence from the most moderate, and all manner of unutterable calumnies from the ignorant and malignant, he placed at stake the dearest pledge which a military man had to offer, and nothing but the deepest conviction of the high and essential importance attached to success can be supposed an adequate motive. How great the chance of miscarriage was supposed, may be estimated from the general opinion of officers of unquestioned talents and experience, possessed of every opportunity of information; how completely the experiment has succeeded, and how much the spirit and patriotism of our ancient allies had been underrated, is evident, not only from those victories in which they have borne a distinguished share, but from the liberal and highly honourable manner in which these opinions have been retracted. The success of this plan, with all its important consequences, we owe to the indefatigable exertions of Field-Marshal Beresford.

NOTE 19, page 368.

*— a race renown'd of old,
Whose war-cry oft has waked the battle-swirl.
— the conquering shout of Græme.*

This stanza alludes to the various achievements of the warlike family of Græme, or Grahame. They are said, by tradition, to have descended from the Scottish chief, under whose command his countrymen stormed the wall built by the Emperor Severus between the Friths of Forth and Clyde, the fragments of which are still popularly called Græme's Dyke. Sir John the Græme, "the hardy, wight, and wise," is well known as the friend of Sir William Wallace. Alderne, Kilsythe, and Tibbermuir, were scenes of the victories of the heroic Marquis of Montrose. The pass of Killycrankie is famous for the action between King William's forces and the Highlanders in 1689,

"Where glad Dundee in faint huzzas expired."

It is seldom that one line can number so many heroes, and yet more rare when it can appeal to the glory of a living descendant in support of its ancient renown.

The allusions to the private history and character of General Grahame may be illustrated by referring to the eloquent and affecting speech of Mr Sheridan, upon the vote of thanks to the Victory of Barosa.

NOTES

TO

ROKEBY.

NOTE 1, page 377.

On Barnard's towers, and Tees's stream, &c.

"BARNARD CASTLE," saith Old Leland, "standeth stately upon Tees." It is founded upon a very high bank, and its ruins impend over the river, including within the area a circuit of six acres and upwards. This once magnificent fortress derives its name from its founder, Barnard Balliol, the ancestor of the short and unfortunate dynasty of that name, which succeeded to the Scottish throne under the patronage of Edward I. and Edward III. Balliol's Tower, afterwards mentioned in the poem, is a round tower of great size, situated at the western extremity of the building. It bears marks of great antiquity, and was remarkable for the curious construction of its vaulted roof, which has been lately greatly injured by the operations of some persons, to whom the tower has been leased for the purpose of making patent shot! The prospect from the top of Balliol's tower commands a rich and magnificent view of the wooded valley of the Tees.

NOTE 2, page 379.

*The morion's plumes his visage hide,
And the buff-coat, in ample fold,
Mantles his form's gigantic mould.*

The use of complete suits of armour was fallen into disuse during the Civil War, though they were still worn by leaders of rank and importance. "In the reign of King James I.," says our military antiquary, "no great alterations were made in the article of defensive armour, except that the buff-coat, or jerkin, which was originally worn under the cuirass, now became frequently a substitute for it, it having been found that a good buff leather would of itself resist the stroke of a sword; this, however, only occasionally took place among the light-armed cavalry and infantry, complete suits of armour being still used among the heavy horse. Buff-coats continued to be worn by the city trained-bands till within the memory of persons now living, so that defensive armour may, in some measure, be said to have terminated in the same materials with which it began, that is the skins of animals or leather."—*Grose's Military Antiquities*. Lond. 1801, 4to, vol. ii. p. 323.

Of the buff-coats, which were worn over the corslets, several are yet preserved; and Captain Grose has given an engraving of one which was used in the time of Charles I. by Sir Francis Rhodes, Bart. of Balbrough-Hall, Derbyshire.

NOTE 3, page 380.

*On his dark face a scorching clime,
And toil, had done the work of time.*

*Death had he seen by sudden blow,
By wasting plague, by tortures slow.*

In this character I have attempted to sketch one of those West India

adventurers, who, during the course of the seventeenth century, were popularly known by the name of Bucaniers. The successes of the English in the predatory incursions upon Spanish America, during the reign of Elizabeth, had never been forgotten: and, from that period downward, the exploits of Drake and Raleigh were imitated, upon a smaller scale indeed, but with equally desperate valour, by small bands of pirates, gathered from all nations, but chiefly French and English. The engrossing policy of the Spaniards tended greatly to increase the number of these freebooters, from whom their commerce and colonies suffered, in the issue, dreadful calamity.

NOTE 4, page 381.

— on Marston heath.
Met, front to front, the ranks of death.

The well-known and desperate battle of Long-Marston Moor, which terminated so unfortunately for the cause of Charles, commenced under very different auspices. Prince Rupert had marched with an army of 20,000 men for the relief of York, then besieged by Sir Thomas Fairfax, at the head of the Parliamentary army, and the Earl of Leven, with the Scottish auxiliary forces. In this he so completely succeeded, that he compelled the besiegers to retreat to Marston Moor, a large open plain, about eight miles distant from the city. Thither they were followed by the Prince, who had now united to his army the garrison of York, probably not less than ten thousand men strong, under the gallant Marquis, (then Earl) of Newcastle. Whitelocke has recorded, with much impartiality, the following particulars of this eventful day:—"The right wing of the Parliament was commanded by Sir Thomas Fairfax, and consisted of all his horse, and three regiments of the Scots horse; the left wing was commanded by the Earl of Manchester and Colonel Cromwell. One body of their foot was commanded by Lord Fairfax, and consisted of his foot, and two brigades of the Scots foot for reserve; and the main body of the rest of the foot was commanded by General Leven.

"The right wing of the Prince's army was commanded by the Earl of Newcastle; the left wing by the Prince himself; and the main body by General Goring, Sir Charles Lucas, and Major-General Porter. Thus were both sides drawn up into battalia.

"July 24, 1644. In this posture both armies faced each other, and about seven o'clock in the morning the fight began between them. The Prince, with his left wing, fell on the Parliament's right wing, routed them, and pursued them a great way; the like did General Goring, Lucas, and Porter, upon the Parliament's main body. The three generals, giving all for lost, hastened out of the field, and many of their soldiers fled, and threw down their arms; the King's forces too eagerly following them, the victory, now almost achieved by them, was again snatched out of their hands. For Colonel Cromwell, with the brave regiment of his countrymen, and Sir Thomas Fairfax having rallied some of his horse, fell upon the Prince's right wing, where the Earl of Newcastle was, and routed them; and the rest of their companions rallying, they fell altogether upon the divided bodies of Rupert and Goring, and totally dispersed them, and obtained a complete victory, after three hours' fight.

"From this battle and the pursuit, some reckon were buried 7000 Englishmen; all agree that above 8000 of the Prince's men were slain in the battle, besides those in the chase, and 3000 prisoners taken, many of their chief officers, twenty-five pieces of ordnance, forty-seven colours, 10,000 arms, two waggons of carabins and pistols, 120 barrels of powder, and all their bag and baggage."—*Whitelocke's Memoirs*, fol. p. 82. Lond. 1682

NOTE 5, page 386.

*Monckton and Mitton told the news,
How troops of Roundheads choked the Ouse,
And many a bonny Scot, aghast,
Spurring his palfrey northward, past,
Cursing the day when zeal or meed
First lured their Lesley o'er the Tweed.*

Monckton and Mitton are villages near the river Ouse, and not very distant from the field of battle. The particulars of the action were violently disputed at the time.

NOTE 6, page 386.

*With his barb'd horse, fresh tidings say,
Stout Cromwell has reacein'd the day.*

Cromwell, with his regiment of cuirassiers, had a principal share in

turning the fate of the day at Marston Moor; which was equally matter of triumph to the Independents, and of grief and heart-burning to the Presbyterians and to the Scottish.

NOTE 7, page 386.

*Do not my native dales prolong
Of Percy Rede the tragic song,
Train'd forward to his bloody fall,
By Girsonfield, that treacherous Hall*

In a poem, entitled "The Lay of the Reedwater Minstrel," Newcastle, 1809, this tale, with many others peculiar to the valley of the Reed, is commemorated:—"The particulars of the traditional story of Percy Reed of Troughend, and the Halls of Girsonfield, the author had from a descendant of the family of Reed. From his account, it appears that Percival Reed, Esquire, a keeper of Reedsdale, was betrayed by the Halls (hence denominated the false-hearted Ha's) to a band of moss-troopers of the name of Crosler, who slew him at Batinghope, near the source of the Reed.

"The Halls were, after the murder of Percy Reed, held in such universal abhorrence and contempt by the inhabitants of Reedsdale, for their cowardly and treacherous behaviour, that they were obliged to leave the country." In another passage, we are informed that the ghost of the injured Borderer is supposed to haunt the banks of a brook called the Pringle. These Reeds of Troughend were a very ancient family, as may be conjectured from their deriving their surname from the river on which they had their mansion. An epitaph on one of their tombs affirms, that the family held their lands of Troughend, which are situated on the Reed, nearly opposite to Otterburn, for the incredible space of nine hundred years.

NOTE 8, page 386.

*And near the spot that gave me name,
The moated mound of Risingham,
Where Reed upon her margin sees
Sweet Woodburne's cottages and trees,
Some ancient sculptor's art has shown,
An outlaw's image on the stone.*

Risingham, upon the river Reed, near the beautiful hamlet of Woodburn, is an ancient Roman station, formerly called *Habitancum*. Camden says, that in his time the popular account bore, that it had been the abode of a deity, or giant, called Magon; and appeals, in support of this tradition, as well as to the etymology of Risingham, or Reisenham, which signifies, in German, the habitation of the giants, to two Roman altars taken out of the river, inscribed, *DEO MAGONI CADENORUM*. About half a mile distant from Risingham, upon an eminence covered with scattered birch-trees and fragments of rock, there is cut upon a large rock, in *alto relievo*, a remarkable figure called Robin of Risingham, or Robin of Reedsdale. It presents a hunter, with his bow raised in one hand, and in the other what seems to be a hare. There is a quiver at the back of the figure, and he is dressed in a long coat, or kirtle, coming down to the knees, and meeting close, with a girdle bound round him. Dr Horseley, who saw all monuments of antiquity with Roman eyes, inclines to think this figure a Roman archer: and certainly the bow is rather of the ancient size than of that which was so formidable in the hand of the English archers of the middle ages. But the rudeness of the whole figure prevents our founding strongly upon mere inaccuracy of proportion. The popular tradition is, that it represents a giant, whose brother resided at Woodburn, and he himself at Risingham. It adds, that they subsisted by hunting, and that one of them, finding the game become too scarce to support them, poisoned his companion, in whose memory the monument was engraved. What strange and tragic circumstance may be concealed under this legend, or whether it is utterly apocryphal, it is now impossible to discover.

NOTE 9, page 387.

— *Do thou revere
The statutes of the Buccaneer.*

The "statutes of the Buccaneers" were, in reality, more equitable than could have been expected from the state of society under which they had been formed. They chiefly related, as may readily be conjectured, to the distribution and the inheritance of their plunder.

When the expedition was completed, the fund of prize-money acquired was thrown together, each party taking his oath that he had retained or concealed no part of the common stock. If any one transgressed in this important particular, the punishment was, his being set ashore on some desert key or island, to shift for himself as he could. The owners of the vessel had then their share assigned for the expenses of the outfit. These were generally old pirates, settled at Tobago, Jamaica, St Domingo, or some other French or English settlement. The surgeon's and carpenter's salaries, with the price of provisions and ammunition, were also defrayed. Then followed the compensation due to the maimed and wounded, rated according to the damage they had sustained; as six hundred pieces of eight, or six slaves, for the loss of an arm or leg, and so in proportion.

"After this act of justice and humanity, the remainder of the booty was divided into as many shares as there were Buccaneers. The commander could only lay claim to a single share, as the rest; but they complimented him with two or three, in proportion as he had acquitted himself to their satisfaction. When the vessel was not the property of the whole company, the person who had fitted it out, and furnished it with necessary arms and ammunition, was entitled to a third of all the prizes. Favour had never any influence in the division of the booty, for every share was determined by lot. Instances of such rigid justice as this are not easily met with, and they extended even to the dead. Their share was given to the man who was known to be their companion when alive, and therefore their heir. If the person who had been killed had no intimate, his part was sent to his relations, when they were known. If there were no friends nor relations, it was distributed in charity to the poor and to churches, which were to pray for the person in whose name these beneficence were given, the fruits of inhuman, but necessary piratical plunder." — *Bayard's History of European Settlements in the East and West Indies, by Justamond*, Lond. 1778, 8vo, iii. p. 41.

NOTE 10, page 393.

The course of Tees.

The view from Barnard Castle commands the rich and magnificent valley of Tees. Immediately adjacent to the river, the banks are very thickly wooded; at a little distance they are more open and cultivated; but, being interspersed with hedge-rows, and with isolated trees of great size and age, they still retain the richness of woodland scenery. The river itself flows in a deep trench of solid rock, chiefly limestone and marble. The finest view of its romantic course is from a handsome modern-built bridge over the Tees, by the late Mr Morritt of Rokeby.

NOTE 11, page 394.

Egliston's grey ruins.

The ruins of this abbey, or priory, (for Tanner calls it the former, and Leland the latter), are beautifully situated upon the angle, formed by a little dell called Thorsgill, at its junction with the Tees.

NOTE 12, page 395.

— *the mound,
Raised by that Legion long renown'd,
Whose votive shrine asserts their claim,
Of pious, faithful, conquering fame.*

Close behind the George Inn at Greta Bridge, there is a well-preserved Roman encampment, surrounded with a triple ditch, lying between the river Greta and a brook called the Tutta. The four entrances are easily to be discerned.

NOTE 13, page 395.

Rokeby's turrets high.

This ancient manor long gave name to a family by whom it is said to

have been possessed from the Conquest downward, and who are at different times distinguished in history. It was the Baron of Rokeby who finally defeated the insurrection of the Earl of Northumberland, *tempore Hen. IV.* The Rokeby, or Rokesby family, continued to be distinguished until the great Civil War, when, having embraced the cause of Charles I., they suffered severely by fines and confiscations. The estate then passed from its ancient possessors to the family of the Robinsons, from whom it was purchased by the father of my valued friend, the present proprietor

NOTE 14, page 395.

*A stern and lone, yet lovely road,
As e'er the foot of Minstrel trode.*

What follows is an attempt to describe the romantic glen, or rather ravine, through which the Greta finds a passage between Rokeby and Mortham; the former situated upon the left bank of Greta, the latter on the right bank, about half a mile nearer to its junction with the Tees.

NOTE 15, page 398.

*What gales are sold on Lapland's shore,
How whistle rash bids tempests roar,
Of witch, of mermaid, and of sprite,
Of Erick's cap and Elmo's light.*

"Also I shall shew very briefly what force conjurers and witches have in constraining the elements enchanted by them or others, that they may exceed or fall short of their natural order: premising this, that the extreme land of North Finland and Lapland was so taught witchcraft formerly in heathenish times, as if they had learned this cursed art from Zoroastres the Persian; though other inhabitants by the sea-coasts are reported to be bewitched with the same madness; for they exercise this devilish art, of all the arts of the world, to admiration; and in this, or other such like mischief, they commonly agree. The Finlanders were wont formerly, amongst their other errors of gentilsme, to sell winds to merchants that were stopt on their coast by contrary weather; and when they had their price, they knit three magical knots, not like to the laws of Cassius, bound up with a thong, and they gave them unto the merchants; observing that rule, that when they unloosed the first they should have a good gale of wind; when the second, a stronger wind; but when they untied the third, they should have such cruel tempests, that they should not be able to look out of the fore-castle to avoid the rocks, nor move a foot to pull down the sails, nor stand at the helm to govern the ships; and they made an unhappy trial of the truth of it who denied that there was any such power in those knots.

"Ericus, King of Sweden, in his time was held second to none in the magical art; and he was so familiar with the evil spirits, which he exceedingly adored, that which way soever he turned his cap, the wind would presently blow that way."—*Olaus Magnus's History of the Goths, Swedes and Vandals.* London, folio, 1658, pp. 45 and 47.

NOTE 16, page 398.

The Demon Frigate.

This is an allusion to a well-known nautical superstition concerning a fantastic vessel, called by sailors the Flying Dutchman, and supposed to be seen about the latitude of the Cape of Good Hope. She is distinguished from earthly vessels by bearing a press of sail when all others are unable, from stress of weather, to show an inch of canvass. The cause of her wandering is not altogether certain; but the general account is, that she was originally a vessel loaded with great wealth, on board of which some horrid act of murder and piracy had been committed; that the plague broke out among the wicked crew who had perpetrated the crime, and that they sailed in vain from port to port, offering, as the price of shelter, the whole of their ill-gotten wealth; that they were excluded from every harbour,

for fear of the contagion which was devouring them; and that, as a punishment of their crimes, the apparition of the ship still continues to haunt those seas in which the catastrophe took place, and is considered by the mariners as the worst of all possible omens.

NOTE 17, page 398.

— *By some desert isle or key.*

What contributed much to the security of the Bucaniers about the Windward Islands, was the great number of little islets, called in that country *keys*. These are small sandy patches, appearing just above the surface of the ocean, covered only with a few bushes and weeds, but sometimes affording springs of water, and, in general, much frequented by turtle. Such little uninhabited spots afforded the pirates good harbours, either for refitting or for the purpose of ambush; they were occasionally the hiding-place of their treasure, and often afforded a shelter to themselves. As many of the atrocities which they practised on their prisoners were committed in such spots, there are some of these keys which even now have an indifferent reputation among seamen, and where they are with difficulty prevailed on to remain ashore at night, on account of the visionary terrors incident to places which have been thus contaminated.

NOTE 18, page 400.

Before the gate of Mortham stood.

The castle of Mortham, which Leland terms "Mr Rokesby's Place, in *ripa ceter*, scant a quarter of a mile from Greta Bridge, and not a quarter of a mile beneath into Tees," is a picturesque tower, surrounded by buildings of different ages, now converted into a farm-house and offices.

Its situation is eminently beautiful, occupying a high bank, at the bottom of which the Greta winds out of the dark, narrow, and romantic dell, which the text has attempted to describe, and flows onward through a more open valley to meet the Tees about a quarter of a mile from the castle. Mortham is surrounded by old trees, happily and widely grouped with Mr Morritt's new plantations.

NOTE 19, page 401.

*There dig, and tomb your precious heap;
And bid the dead your treasure keep.*

If time did not permit the Bucaniers to lavish away their plunder in their usual debaucheries, they were wont to hide it, with many superstitious solemnities, in the desert islands and keys which they frequented, and where much treasure, whose lawless owners perished without reclaiming it, is still supposed to be concealed. The most cruel of mankind are often the most superstitious; and these pirates are said to have recourse to a horrid ritual, in order to secure an unearthly guardian to their treasures. They killed a Negro or Spaniard, and buried him with the treasure, believing that his spirit would haunt the spot, and terrify away all intruders. I cannot produce any other authority on which this custom is ascribed to them than that of maritime tradition, which is, however, amply sufficient for the purposes of poetry.

NOTE 20, page 402.

The power

*That unsubdued and lurking lies
To take the felon by surprise,
And force him, as by magic spell,
In his despite his guilt to tell.*

All who are conversant with the administration of criminal justice, must remember many occasions in which malefactors appear to have conducted themselves with a species of infatuation, either by making unnecessary

confidences respecting their guilt, or by sudden and involuntary allusions to circumstances by which it could not fail to be exposed. A remarkable instance occurred in the celebrated case of Eugene Aram. A skeleton being found near Knaresborough, was supposed, by the persons who gathered around the spot, to be the remains of one Clarke, who had disappeared some years before, under circumstances leading to a suspicion of his having been murdered. One Houseman, who had mingled in the crowd, suddenly said, while looking at the skeleton, and hearing the opinion which was buzzed around, "That is no more Dan Clarke's bone than it is mine!"—a sentiment expressed so positively, and with such peculiarity of manner, as to lead all who heard him to infer that he must necessarily know where the real body had been interred. Accordingly, being apprehended, he confessed having assisted Eugene Aram to murder Clarke, and to hide his body in Saint Robert's Cave. It happened to the author himself, while conversing with a person accused of an atrocious crime, for the purpose of rendering him professional assistance upon his trial, to hear the prisoner after the most solemn and reiterated protestations that he was guiltless, suddenly, and, as it were, involuntarily, in the course of his communications, make such an admission as was altogether incompatible with innocence.

NOTE 21, page 407.

*Nobles and knights, so proud of late,
Must fine for freedom and estate.*

*Right heavy shall his ransom be,
Unless that maid compound with thee!*

After the battle of Marston Moor, the Earl of Newcastle retired beyond sea in disgust, and many of his followers laid down their arms and made the best composition they could with the Committees of Parliament. Fines were imposed upon them in proportion to their estates and degrees of delinquency, and these fines were often bestowed upon such persons as had deserved well of the commons. In some circumstances it happened that the oppressed cavaliers were fain to form family alliances with some powerful person among the triumphant party.

NOTE 22, page 408.

*In Redesdale his youth had heard
Each art her wily dalesmen dared,
When Rookens-edge, and Redswair high,
To bugle rung and bloodhound's cry.*

"What manner of cattle-stealers they are that inhabit these valleys in the marches of both kingdoms, John Lesley, a Scotche man himself, and Bishop of Ross, will inform you. They sally out of their own borders in the night, in troops, through unfrequented by-ways and many intricate windings. All the day-time they refresh themselves and their horses in lurking holes they had pitched upon before, till they arrive in the dark in those places they have a design upon. As soon as they have seized upon the booty, they, in like manner, return home in the night, through blind ways, and fetching many a compass. The more skillful any captain is to pass through those wild deserts, crooked turnings, and deep precipices, in the thickest mists, his reputation is the greater, and he is looked upon as a man of an excellent head."—*Camden's Britannia.*

The inhabitants of the valleys of Tyne and Reed were, in ancient times, so inordinately addicted to these depredations, that in 1564, the incorporated Merchant-adventurers of Newcastle made a law that none born in these districts should be admitted apprentice. The inhabitants are stated to be so generally addicted to rapine, that no faith should be reposed in those proceeding from "such lewde and wicked progenitors." This regulation continued to stand unrepealed until 1771. A beggar, in an old play, describes himself as "born in Redesdale, in Northumberland, and come of a wight-riding surname, called the Robsons, good honest men and true, sar-

ing a little shifting for their living, God help them !"—a description which would have applied to most Borderers on both sides.

NOTE 23, page 409.

*Hiding his face, lest foemen spy
The sparkle of his swarthy eye.*

After one of the recent battles, in which the Irish rebels were defeated, one of their most active leaders was found in a bog, in which he was immersed up to the shoulders, while his head was concealed by an impending ledge of turf. Being detected and seized, notwithstanding his precaution, he became solicitous to know how his retreat had been discovered. "I caught," answered the Sutherland Highlander, by whom he was taken, "the sparkle of your eye." Those who are accustomed to mark hares upon their form usually discover them by the same circumstance.

NOTE 24, page 413.

*Of my marauding on the clowns
Of Calverley and Bradford downs.*

The troops of the King, when they first took the field, were as well disciplined as could be expected from circumstances. But as the circumstances of Charles became less favourable, and his funds for regularly paying his forces decreased, habits of military license prevailed among them in greater excess. Lacy the player, who served his master during the Civil War, brought out, after the Restoration, a piece called *The Old Troop*, in which he seems to have commemorated some real incidents which occurred in his military career. The names of the officers of the Troop sufficiently express their habits. We have *Flea-flint Plunder-Master-General*, *Captain Ferretfarm*, and *Quarter-Master Burn-drop*. The officers of the Troop are in league with these worthies, and connive at their plundering the country for a suitable share in the booty. All this was undoubtedly drawn from the life, which Lacy had an opportunity to study. The moral of the whole is comprehended in a rebuke given to the lieutenant, whose disorders in the country are said to prejudice the King's cause more than his courage in the field could recompense. The piece is by no means void of farcical humour.

NOTE 25, page 414.

*— Brignall's woods, and Scargill's, wave,
E'en now, o'er many a sister cave.*

The banks of the Greta, below Rutherford Bridge, abound in seams of greyish slate, which are wrought in some places to a very great depth under ground, thus forming artificial caverns, which, when the seam has been exhausted, are gradually hidden by the underwood which grows in profusion upon the romantic banks of the river. In times of public confusion, they might be well adapted to the purposes of banditti.

NOTE 26, page 417.

When Spain waged warfare with our land.

There was a short war with Spain in 1625-6, which will be found to agree pretty well with the chronology of the poem. But probably Bertram held an opinion very common among the maritime heroes of the age, that "there was no peace beyond the Line." The Spanish *guarda-costas* were constantly employed in aggressions upon the trade and settlements of the English and French; and, by their own severities, gave room for the system of bucaniering, at first adopted in self-defence and retaliation, and afterwards persevered in from habit and thirst of plunder.

NOTE 27, page 419.

— our comrades' strife.

The laws of the Bucaniers, and their successors the Pirates, however severe and equitable, were, like other laws, often set aside by the stronger party. Their quarrels about the division of the spoil fill their history, and they as frequently arose out of mere frolic, or the tyrannical humour of their chiefs. An anecdote of Teach, (called Blackbeard), shows that their habitual indifference for human life extended to their companions, as well as their enemies and captives:—

"One night, drinking in his cabin with Hands, the pilot, and another man, Blackbeard, without any provocation, privately draws out a small pair of pistols, and cocks them under the table, which, being perceived by the man, he withdrew upon deck, leaving Hands, the pilot, and the captain together. When the pistols were ready, he blew out the candles, and crossing his hands, discharged them at his company. Hands, the master, was shot through the knee, and lamed for life; the other pistol did no execution."—*Johnson's History of Pirates*. Lond. 1724, 8vo, vol. I. p. 38.

NOTE 28, page 421.

Song ——— *Adieu for evermore.*

The last verse of this song is taken from the fragment of an old Scottish ballad, of which I only recollected two verses when the first edition of Rokeby was published. Mr Thomas Sheridan kindly pointed out to me an entire copy of this beautiful song, which seems to express the fortunes of some follower of the Stuart family:—

"It was a' for our rightful king
That we left fair Scotland's strand,
It was a' for our rightful king
That we e'er saw Irish land,
My dear,
That we e'er saw Irish land.

"Now all is done that man can do,
And all is done in vain!
My love! my native land, adieu!
For I must cross the main,
My dear,
For I must cross the main.

He turn'd him round and right about,
All on the Irish shore,
He gave his bridle-reins a shake,

With, Adieu for evermore, My dear!
Adieu for evermore!

"The soldier fræ the war returns,
And the merchant fræ the main,
But I hae parted wi' my love,
And ne'er to meet again,
My dear,
And ne'er to meet again.

"When day is gone and night is come,
And a' are bound to sleep,
I think on them that's far awa
The lee-lang night, and weep,
My dear,
The lee-lang night, and weep."

NOTE 29, page 422.

Rere-cross on Stanmore.

This is a fragment of an old cross called *Rere-cross* or *Rce-cross*, with its pediment, surrounded by an intrenchment, upon the very summit of the waste ridge of Stanmore, near a small house of entertainment called the Spittal. The situation of the cross, and the pains taken to defend it, seem to indicate that it was intended for a land-mark of importance.

NOTE 30, page 423.

*When Denmark's raven soar'd on high,
Triumphant through Northumbrian sky,
Till, hovering near, her fatal croak
Bade Reged's Britons dread the yoke.*

About the year of God 866, the Danes, under their celebrated leaders Ingvar, (more properly Agnar) and Hubba, sons, it is said, of the still more celebrated Regnar Lodbrog, invaded Northumberland, bringing with them the magical standard, so often mentioned in poetry, called REAFEN, or Rulfan, from its bearing the figure of a raven. The Danes renewed and extended their incursions, and began to colonize, establishing a kind of capital at York, from which they spread their conquests and incursions in every direction. Stanmore, which divides the mountains of Westmoreland and Cumberland, was probably the boundary of the Danish kingdom in that direction.

NOTE 31, page 423.

*Beneath the shade the Northmen came,
Fie'd on each vale a Runic name.*

The heathen Danes have left several traces of their religion in the upper part of Teesdale. Balder-garth, which derives its name from the unfortunate son of Odin, is a tract of waste land on the very ridge of Stanmore; and a brook which falls into the Tees near Barnard Castle, is named after the same deity. A field upon the banks of the Tees is also termed Woden-Croft, from the supreme deity of the Edda.

NOTE 32, page 426.

*Who has not heard how brave O'Neale
In English blood imbrued his steel?*

The O'Neale here meant, for more than one succeeded to the chieftainship during the reign of Elizabeth, was Hugh, the grandson of Con O'Neale, called Con Bacco, or the Lame. His father, Matthew O'Kelly, was illegitimate, and, being the son of a blacksmith's wife, was usually called Matthew the Blacksmith. His father, nevertheless, destined his succession to him, and he was created, by Elizabeth, Baron of Dungannon. Upon the death of Con Bacco, this Matthew was slain by his brother. Hugh narrowly escaped the same fate, and was protected by the English. Shane O'Neale, his uncle, called Shane Dymas, was succeeded by Turlough Lynogh O'Neale; after whose death Hugh, having assumed the chieftainship, became nearly as formidable to the English as any by whom it had been possessed. He rebelled repeatedly, and as often made submissions, of which it was usually a condition that he should not any longer assume the title of O'Neale; in lieu of which he was created Earl of Tyrone. But this condition he never observed longer than until the pressure of superior force was withdrawn. His baffling the gallant Earl of Essex in the field, and overreaching him in a treaty, was the induction to that nobleman's tragedy. Lord Mountjoy succeeded in finally subjugating O'Neale; but it was not till the succession of James, to whom he made personal submission, and was received with civility at court.

NOTE 33, page 426.

*But chief arose his victor pride,
When that brave Marshal fought and died.*

The chief victory which Tyrone obtained over the English was in a battle fought near Blackwater, while he besieged a fort garrisoned by the English, which commanded the passes into his country.

Tyrone is said to have entertained a personal animosity against the knight-marshal, Sir Henry Bagnal, whom he accused of detaining the letters which he sent to Queen Elizabeth, explanatory of his conduct, and offering terms of submission. The river, called by the English Blackwater, is termed in Irish, Avon-Duff, which has the same signification. Both names are mentioned by Spenser in his "Marriage of the Thames and the Medway." But I understand that his verses relate not to the Blackwater of Ulster, but to a river of the same name in the south of Ireland:—

"Swift Avon-Duff, which of the Englishmen
Is called Blackwater" —

NOTE 34, page 426.

The Tanist he to great O'Neale.

"Eudox. What is that which you call Tanist and Tanistry? These be names and terms never heard of nor known to us.

"Iren. It is a custom amongst all the Irish, that presently after the death of one of their chiefs lords or captains, they doe presently assemble themselves to a place generally appointed and knowne unto them, to choose

another in his stead, where they do nominate and elect, for the most part not the eldest sonne, nor any of the children of the lord deceased, but the next to him in blood, that is, the eldest and worthiest, as commonly the next brother unto him; if he have any, or the next cousin, or so forth, as any is elder in that kindred or sept; and then next to them doe they choose the next of the blood to be Tanist, who shall next succeed him in the said captainry, if he live thereunto."—*Spenser's View of the State of Ireland*, apud *Works*, Lond. 1805, Svo, vol. viii. p. 306.

The Tanist, therefore, of O'Neale, was the heir-apparent of his power. This kind of succession appears also to have regulated, in very remote times, the succession to the crown of Scotland. It would have been imprudent, if not impossible, to have asserted a minor's right of succession in those stormy days, when the principles of policy were summed up in my friend Mr Wordsworth's lines:—

— "the good old rule
Sufficeth them; the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can."

NOTE 35, page 427.

*With wild majestic port and tone,
Like envoy of some barbarous throne.*

The Irish chiefs, in their intercourse with the English, and with each other, were wont to assume the language and style of independent royalty.

NOTE 36, page 430.

Great Nial of the Pledges Nine.

Neal Naighvallach, or Of the Nine Hostages, is said to have been Monarch of all Ireland, during the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century. He exercised a predatory warfare on the coast of England and of Bretagne, or Armorica; and from the latter country brought off the celebrated Saint Patrick, a youth of sixteen, among other captives, whom he transported to Ireland. Neal derived his epithet from nine nations, or tribes, whom he held under his subjection, and from whom he took hostages.

NOTE 37, page 430.

Shane-Dymas Wild.

This Shane-Dymas, or John the Wanton, held the title and power of O'Neale in the earlier part of Elizabeth's reign, against whom he rebelled repeatedly.

"This chieftain is handed down to us as the most proud and profligate man on earth. He was immoderately addicted to women and wine. He is said to have had 200 tuns of wine at once in his cellar at Dandram, but usquebaugh was his favourite liquor. He spared neither age nor condition of the fair sex. Altho' so illiterate that he could not write, he was not destitute of address, his understanding was strong, and his courage daring. He had 600 men for his guard; 4000 foot, 1000 horse for the field. He claimed superiority over all the lords of Ulster, and called himself king thereof."—*Camden's Britannia*, by Gough. Lond. 1806, fol. vol. iv. p. 442.

When reduced to extremity by the English, and forsaken by his allies, this Shane-Dymas fled to Clandeboy, then occupied by a colony of Scottish Highlanders of the family of MacDonell. He was at first courteously received; but by degrees they began to quarrel about the slaughter of some of their friends whom Shane-Dymas had put to death, and advancing from words to deeds, fell upon him with their broadswords, and cut him to pieces. After his death a law was made that none should presume to take the name and title of O'Neale.

NOTE 38, page 430.

— *Geraldine.*

The O'Neales were closely allied with this powerful and warlike family;

for Henry Owen O'Neale married the daughter of Thomas, Earl of Kildare, and their son Con-More married his cousin-german, a daughter of Gerald, Earl of Kildare. This Con-More cursed any of his posterity who should learn the English language, sow corn, or build houses, so as to invite the English to settle in their country. Others ascribe this anathema to his son Con-Bacco.—See *Walker's Irish Bards*, p. 140.

NOTE 39, page 431.

— *his page—the next degree,
In that old time, to chivalry.*

Originally the order of chivalry embraced three ranks:—1. The Page; 2. The Squire; 3. the Knight;—a gradation which seems to have been initiated in the mystery of free-masonry. But, before the reign of Charles I., the custom of serving as a squire had fallen into disuse, though the order of the page was still, to a certain degree, in observance. This state of servitude was so far from inferring anything degrading, that it was considered as the regular school for acquiring every quality necessary for future distinction.

NOTE 40, page 440.

Seem'd half abandon'd to decay.

The ancient castle of Rokeby stood exactly upon the site of the present mansion, by which a part of its walls is enclosed. It is surrounded by a profusion of fine wood, and the park in which it stands is adorned by the junction of the Greta and of the Tees. The title of Baron Rokeby of Armagh was, in 1777, conferred on the Right Reverend Richard Robinson, Primate of Ireland, descended of the Robinsons, formerly of Rokeby, in Yorkshire.

NOTE 41, page 444.

The Filea of O'Neale was he.

The Filea, or Ollamh Re Dan, was the proper bard, or, as the name literally implies, poet. Each chieftain of distinction had one or more in his service, whose office was usually hereditary. There were itinerant bards of less elevated rank, but all were held in the highest veneration.

NOTE 42, page 444.

*Ah, Clandeboy! thy friendly floor,
Slieve-Donard's oak shall light no more.*

Clandeboy is a district of Ulster, formerly possessed by the sept of the O'Neales, and Slieve-Donard, a romantic mountain in the same province. The clan was ruined after Tyrone's great rebellion, and their places of abode laid desolate. The ancient Irish, wild and uncultivated in other respects, did not yield even to their descendants in practising the most free and extended hospitality.

NOTE 43, page 445.

Marwood-chase and Tollar Hill.

Marwood-chase is the old park extending along the Durham side of the Tees, attached to Barnard Castle. Toller Hill is an eminence on the Yorkshire side of the river, commanding a superb view of the ruins.

NOTE 44, page 447.

The ancient English minstrel's dress.

Among the entertainments presented to Elizabeth at Kenilworth Castle, was the introduction of a person designed to represent a travelling minstrel, who entertained her with a solemn story out of the Acts of King Arthur. Of this person's dress and appearance Mr Laneham has given us a very accurate account, transferred by Bishop Percy to the preliminary Dissertation on Minstrels, prefixed to his *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, vol. I.

NOTES
TO
THE LORD OF THE ISLES.

NOTE 1, page 488.

Thy rugged halls, Artornish! rung.

THE ruins of the Castle of Artornish are situated upon a promontory, on the Morven, or mainland side of the Sound of Mull—a name given to the deep arm of the sea which divides that island from the continent. The situation is wild and romantic in the highest degree, having on the one hand a high and precipitous chain of rocks overhanging the sea, and on the other the narrow entrance to the beautiful salt-water lake, called Loch Alline, which is in many places finely fringed with copsewood. The ruins of Artornish are not now very considerable, and consist chiefly of the remains of an old keep, or tower, with fragments of outward defences. But, in former days, it was a place of great consequence, being one of the principal strongholds, which the Lords of the Isles, during the period of their stormy independence, possessed upon the mainland of Argyleshire.

It is almost opposite to the Bay of Aros, in the Island of Mull, where there was another castle, the occasional residence of the Lords of the Isles.

NOTE 2, page 488.

*Rude Heiskar's seal, through surges dark,
Will long pursue the minstrel's bark.*

The seal displays a taste for music, which could scarcely be expected from his habits and local predilections. They will long follow a boat in which any musical instrument is played, and even a tune simply whistled has attractions for them. The Dean of the Isles says of Heiskar, a small uninhabited rock, about twelve (Scottish) miles from the Isle of Uist, that an infinite slaughter of seals takes place there.

NOTE 3, page 490.

*— a turret's airy head,
Slender and steep, and battled round,
O'erlook'd, dark Mull! thy mighty Sound.*

The Sound of Mull, which divides that island from the continent of Scotland, is one of the most striking scenes which the Hebrides afford to the traveller. Sailing from Oban to Aros, or Tobermory, through a narrow channel, yet deep enough to bear vessels of the largest burden, he has on his left the bold and mountainous shores of Mull; on the right, those of that district of Argyleshire, called Morven, or Morvern, successively indented by deep salt-water lochs, running up many miles inland. To the south-eastward arise a prodigious range of mountains, among which Cruachan-Ben is pre-eminent. And to the north-east is the no less huge and picturesque range of the Adnamurchan hills. Many ruinous castles, situated generally upon cliffs, overhanging the ocean, add interest to the scene.

NOTE 4, page 491.

The heir of mighty Somerled.

Somerled wasthane of Argyle and Lord of the Isles, about the middle of the twelfth century. He seems to have exercised his authority in both

capacities, independent of the crown of Scotland, against which he often stood in hostility. He made various incursions upon the western lowlands during the reign of Malcolm IV., and seems to have made peace with him upon the terms of an independent prince, about the year 1157. In 1164, he resumed the war against Malcolm, and invaded Scotland with a large, but probably a tumultuary army, collected in the isles in the mainland of Argyleshire, and in the neighbouring provinces of Ireland. He was defeated and slain in an engagement with a very inferior force, near Renfrew.

NOTE 5, page 491.

Lord of the Isles.

The representative of this independent principality, for such it seems to have been, though acknowledging occasionally the pre-eminence of the Scottish crown, was, at the period of the poem, Angus, called Angus Og; but the name has been, *euphonia gratia*, exchanged for that of Ronald, which frequently occurs in the genealogy. Angus was a protector of Robert Bruce, whom he received in his Castle of Dunnavearty, during the time of his greatest distress.

NOTE 6, page 492.

— *The House of Lorn.*

The House of Lorn, was, like the Lord of the Isles, descended from a son of Somerled, slain at Renfrew, in 1164. This son obtained the succession of his mainland territories, comprehending the greater part of the three districts of Lorn, in Argyleshire, and of course might rather be considered as petty princes than feudal barons. They assumed the patronymic appellation of Mac-Dougal, by which they are distinguished in the history of the middle ages.

NOTE 7, page 496.

*Awaked before the rushing prow,
The mimic fires of ocean glow,
Those lightnings of the wave.*

The phenomenon called by sailors Sea-fire, is one of the most beautiful and interesting which is witnessed in the Hebrides. At times the ocean appears entirely illuminated around the vessel, and a long train of lambent coruscations are perpetually bursting upon the sides of the vessel, or pursuing her wake through the darkness.

NOTE 8, page 501.

That keen knight, De Argentine.

Sir Egidius, or Giles De Argentine, was one of the most accomplished knights of the period. He had served in the wars of Henry of Luxemburg with such high reputation, that he was, in popular estimation, the third worthy of the age. Those to whom fame assigned precedence over him were, Henry of Luxemburg himself, and Robert Bruce. Argentine had warred in Palestine, encountered thrice with the Saracens, and had slain two antagonists in each engagement:—an easy matter, he said, for one Christian knight to slay two Pagan dogs.

NOTE 9, page 501.

*"Fill me the mighty cup!" he said,
"Erst own'd by royal Somerled."*

A Hebridean drinking cup, of the most ancient and curious workmanship, has been long preserved in the castle of Dunvegan, in Skye, the romantic seat of Mac-Leod of Macleod, the chief of that ancient and powerful clan. The horn of Rorie More, preserved in the same family, and recorded by Dr Johnson, is not to be compared with this piece of antiquity which is one of the greatest curiosities in Scotland.

NOTE 10, page 503.

— the rebellious Scottish crew,
 Who to Rath-Erin's shelter drew,
 With Carrick's outlaw'd Chief?

It must be remembered by all who have read the Scottish history, that after he had slain Comyn at Dumfries, and asserted his right to the Scottish crown, Robert Bruce was reduced to the greatest extremity by the English and their adherents. He was crowned at Scone by the general consent of the Scottish barons, but his authority endured but a short time. According to the phrase said to have been used by his wife, he was for that year "a summer king, but not a winter one."

NOTE 11, page 504.

The Brooch of Lorn.

It has been generally mentioned in the preceding notes, that Robert Bruce, after his defeat at Methven, being hard pressed by the English, endeavoured, with the dispirited remnant of his followers, to escape from Breadalbane and the mountains of Perthshire into the Argyleshire Highlands. But he was encountered and repulsed, after a very severe engagement, by the Lord of Lorn. Bruce's personal strength and courage were never displayed to greater advantage than in this conflict. There is a tradition in the family of the Mac-Dougals of Lorn, that their chieftain engaged in personal battle with Bruce himself, while the latter was employed in protecting the retreat of his men; that Mac-Dougal was struck down by the king, whose strength of body was equal to his vigour of mind, and would have been slain on the spot had not two of Lorn's vassals, a father and son, whom tradition terms Mac-Keech, rescued him, by seizing the mantle of the monarch, and dragging him from above his adversary. Bruce rid himself of these foes by two blows of his redoubted battle-axe, but was so closely pressed by the other followers of Lorn, that he was forced to abandon the mantle, and brooch which fastened it, clasped in the dying grasp of the Mac-Keechs. A studded brooch, said to have been that which King Robert lost upon this occasion, was long preserved in the family of Mac-Dougal, and was lost in a fire which consumed their temporary residence.

NOTE 12, pages 498, 505.

*When Comyn fell beneath the knife,
 Of that fell homicide The Bruce.*—p. 498.

*Vain Kirkpatrick's bloody dirk,
 Making sure of murder's work.*—p. 505.

Every reader must recollect that the proximate cause of Bruce's asserting his right to the crown of Scotland, was the death of John, called the Red Comyn. The causes of this act of violence, equally extraordinary from the high rank both of the perpetrator and sufferer, and from the place where the slaughter was committed, are variously related by the Scottish and English historians, and cannot now be ascertained. The fact that they met at the high altar of the Minorites, or Greyfriar's Church in Dumfries, that their difference broke out into high and insulting language, and that Bruce drew his dagger and stabbed Comyn, is certain. Rushing to the door of the church, Bruce met two powerful barons, Kirkpatrick of Closeburn, and James de Lindsay, who eagerly asked him what tidings? "Bad tidings," answered Bruce; "I doubt I have slain Comyn."—"Doubtest thou?" said Kirkpatrick; "I make sicker," (*i. e.* sure). With these words, he and Lindsay rushed into the church, and despatched the wounded Comyn. The Kirkpatricks of Closeburn assumed, in memory of this deed, a hand holding a dagger, with the memorable words, "I make sicker."

NOTE 13, page 505.

*Barendown fled fast away,
Fled the fiery De La Haye.*

These knights are enumerated by Barbour among the small number of Bruce's adherents, who remained in arms with him after the battle of Methven.

NOTE 14, page 510.

*Was't not enough, to Ronald's bower
I brought thee, like a paramour.*

It was anciently customary in the Highlands to bring the bride to the house of the husband. Nay, in some cases the complaisance was stretched so far, that she remained there upon trial for a twelvemonth; and the bridegroom, even after this period of cohabitation, retained an option of refusing to fulfil his engagement. It is said that a desperate feud ensued between the clans of Mac-Donald of Sleate and Mac-Leod, owing to the former chief having availed himself of this license to send back to Dunvegan a sister, or daughter of the latter. Mac-Leod, resenting the indignity, observed, that since there was no wedding bonfire, there should be one to solemnize the divorce. Accordingly, he burned and laid waste the territories of Mac-Donald, who retaliated, and a deadly feud, with all its accompaniments, took place in form.

NOTE 15, page 510.

*Since Matchless Wallace first had been
In mock'ry crown'd with wreaths of green.*

There is something singularly doubtful about the mode in which Wallace was taken. That he was betrayed to the English is indubitable; and popular fame charges Sir John Menteith with the indelible infamy. "Accursed," says Arnold Blair, "be the day of nativity of John de Menteith, and may his name be struck out of the book of life." But John de Menteith was all along a zealous favourer of the English interest, and was governor of Dumbarton Castle by commission from Edward the First; and therefore, as the accurate Lord Hailes has observed, could not be the friend and confidant of Wallace, as tradition states him to be. The truth seems to be, that Menteith, thoroughly engaged in the English interest, pursued Wallace closely, and made him prisoner through the treachery of an attendant, whom Peter Langtoft calls Jack Short.

The infamy of seizing Wallace must, therefore, rest between a degenerate Scottish nobleman, the vassal of England, and a domestic, the obscure agent of his treachery; between Sir John Menteith, son of Walter, Earl of Menteith, and the traitor Jack Short.

NOTE 16, page 510.

*Was not the life of Athole shed,
To soothe the tyrant's sicken'd bed?*

John de Strathbogie, Earl of Athole, had attempted to escape out of the kingdom, but a storm cast him upon the coast, when he was taken, sent to London, and executed, with circumstances of great barbarity, being first half strangled, then let down from the gallows while yet alive, barbarously dismembered, and his body burnt. Matthew of Westminster tells us that King Edward, then extremely ill, received great ease from the news that his relative was apprehended—"Quo audito, Rex Anglie, etsi gravissimo morbo tunc langueret, levius tamen tulit dolorem." To this singular expression the text alludes.

NOTE 17, page 512.

*While I the blessed cross advance,
And expiate this unhappy chance
In Palestine, with sword and lance.*

Bruce uniformly professed, and probably felt, compunction for having

violated the sanctuary of the church by the slaughter of Comyn; and finally, in his last hours, in testimony of his faith, penitence, and zeal, he requested James, Lord Douglas, to carry his heart to Jerusalem, to be there deposited in the Holy Sepulchre.

NOTE 18, page 512.

*De Bruce! I rose with purpose dread
To speak my curse upon thy head.*

So soon as the notice of Comyn's slaughter reached Rome, Bruce and his adherents were excommunicated. It was published first by the Archbishop of York, and renewed at different times, particularly by Lambyton, Bishop of St. Andrews, in 1308; but it does not appear to have answered the purpose which the English monarch expected.

NOTE 19, page 513.

*A hunted wanderer on the wild,
On foreign shores a man exiled.*

This is not metaphorical. The echoes of Scotland did actually

—————"ring
With the bloodhounds that bayed for her fugitive king."

NOTE 20, page 517.

*"Far than you,
Even I"—he paused; for Falkirk's woes
Upon his conscious soul arose.*

I have followed the vulgar and inaccurate tradition, that Bruce fought against Wallace, and the array of Scotland, at the fatal battle of Falkirk.

NOTE 21, page 518.

*These are the savage wilds that lie
North of Strathnaddill and Dunskeye.*

The extraordinary piece of scenery which I have here attempted to describe, is, I think, unparalleled in any part of Scotland, at least in any which I have happened to visit. It lies just upon the frontier of the Laird of MacLeod's country, which is thereabouts divided from the estate of Mr Macalister of Strath-Aird, called Strathnaddill by the Dean of the Isles.

NOTE 22, page 526.

*And mermaid's alabaster grot,
Who bathes her limbs in sunless well
Deep in Strathaird's enchanted cell.*

Imagination can hardly conceive anything more beautiful than the extraordinary grotto discovered not many years since upon the estate of Alexander Mac-Alister, Esq. of Strathaird. It has since been much and deservedly celebrated, and a full account of its beauties has been published by Dr Mac-Leay of Oban.

NOTE 23, page 529.

Yet to no sense of selfish wrongs.

The generosity which does justice to the character of an enemy, often marks Bruce's sentiments, as recorded by the faithful Barbour.

NOTE 24, page 532.

And Ronin's mountains dark have sent.

Ronin (popularly called Rùm, a name which a poet may be pardoned for avoiding if possible) is a very rough and mountainous island, adjacent to those of Elgg and Cannay.

NOTE 25, page 533.

On Scooreigg next a warning light.

These, and the following lines of the stanza, refer to a dreadful tale of feudal vengeance, of which unfortunately there are relics that still attest the truth. Scoor-Eigg is a high peak in the centre of the small Isle of Eigg, or Egg, one of the caverns in which was the scene of a horrid feudal vengeance. This noted cave has a very narrow opening, through which one can hardly creep on his knees and hands. It rises steep and lofty within, and runs into the bowels of the rock to the depth of 255 measured feet; the height at the entrance may be about three feet, but rises within to eighteen or twenty, and the breadth may vary in the same proportion. The rude and stony bottom of this cave is strewn with the bones of men, women, and children, the sad relics of the ancient inhabitants of the island, 200 in number, who were slain on the occasion.

NOTE 26, page 534.

Scenes sung by him who sings no more.

The ballad entitled "Macphail of Colonsay, and the Mermaid of Corrievrekin" [see *Border Minstrelsy*, vol. iv. p. 235], was composed by John Leyden, from a tradition which he found while making a tour through the Hebrides about 1801, soon before his fatal departure for India.

NOTE 27, page 534.

*Up Tarbat's western lake they bore,
And dragg'd their bark the isthmus o'er.*

The peninsula of Cantyre is joined to South Knapdale by a very narrow isthmus, formed by the western and eastern Loch of Tarbat. These two saltwater lakes, or bays, encroach so far upon the land, and the extremities come so near to each other, that there is not above a mile of land to divide them.

NOTE 28, page 535.

And bade Loch Ranza smile.

Loch Ranza is a beautiful bay, on the northern extremity of Arran, opening towards East Tarbat Loch.

NOTE 29, page 537.

*Each to Loch Ranza's margin spring;
That blast was winded by the King!*

The passage in Barbour, describing the landing of Bruce, and his being recognised by Douglas, and those of his followers who had preceded him, by the sound of his horn, is in the original singularly simple and affecting.

NOTE 30, page 539.

*His brother blamed,
But shared the weakness, while ashamed.*

The kind and yet fiery character of Edward Bruce, is well painted by Barbour, in the account of his behaviour after the battle of Bannockburn. Sir Walter Ross, one of the very few Scottish nobles who fell in that battle, was so dearly beloved by Edward, that he wished the victory had been lost, so Ross had lived.

NOTE 31, page 542.

*Thou heardest a wretched female plain
In agony of travail-pain.*

This incident, which illustrates so happily the chivalrous generosity of Bruce's character, is one of the many simple and natural traits recorded by Barbour. It occurred during the expedition which Bruce made to Ireland, to support the pretensions of his brother Edward to the throne of that kingdom.

NOTE 32, page 546.

O'er chasms he pass'd, where fractures wide.

The interior of the Island of Arran abounds with beautiful Highland scenery. The hills, being very rocky and precipitous, afford some cataraacts of great height, though of inconsiderable breadth.

NOTE 33, page 546.

Old Brodick's gothic towers were seen.

Brodick or Brathwick Castle, in the Isle of Arran, is an ancient fortress, near an open roadstead called Brodick-Bay, and not far distant from a tolerable harbour, closed in by the Island of Lamlash.

NOTE 34, page 547.

A language much unmeet he hears.

Barbour, with great simplicity, gives an anecdote, from which it would seem that the vice of profane swearing, afterwards too general among the Scottish nation, was, at this time, confined to military men.

NOTE 35, page 552.

Now ask you whence that wondrous light.

An ingenious correspondent, to whom I am obliged for much information respecting Turnberry and its neighbourhood, writes me that—"The only tradition now remembered of the landing of Robert the Bruce in Carrick, relates to the fire seen by him from the Isle of Arran."

NOTE 36, page 559.

The Bruce hath won his father's hall!

I have followed the flattering and pleasing tradition, that the Bruce, after his descent upon the coast of Ayrshire, actually gained possession of his maternal castle. But the tradition is not accurate.

NOTE 37, page 561.

When Bruce's banner had victorious flow'd.

The first important advantage gained by Bruce, after landing at Turnberry, was over Aymer de Vallance, Earl of Pembroke, the same by whom he had been defeated near Methven.

NOTE 38, page 561.

When English blood oft deluged Douglas-dale.

The "good Lord James of Douglas," during these commotions, often took from the English his own castle of Douglas, but being unable to garrison it, contented himself with destroying the fortifications, and retiring into the mountains.

NOTE 39, page 561.

And fiery Edward routed stout St John.

"John de St John, with 15,000 horsemen, had advanced to oppose the inroad of the Scots. By a forced march he endeavoured to surprise them, but intelligence of his motions was timeously received."

NOTE 40, page 561.

When Randolph's war-cry swell'd the southern gale.

Thomas Randolph, Bruce's sister's son, a renowned Scottish chief, was in the early part of his life not more remarkable for consistency than Bruce himself.

NOTE 41, page 562.

*—Stirling's towers,
Beleagu'r'd by King Robert's powers.*

When a long train of success, actively improved by Robert Bruce, had made him master of almost all Scotland, Stirling Castle continued to hold

out. The care of the blockade was committed by the King to his brother Edward, who concluded a treaty with Sir Philip Mowbray, the governor, that he should surrender the fortress, if it were not succoured by the King of England before St John the Baptist's day.

NOTE 42, page 562.

And Cambria but of late subdued.

Edward the First, with the usual policy of a conqueror, employed the Welsh, whom he had subdued, to assist him in his Scottish wars, for which their habits, as mountaineers, particularly fitted them.

NOTE 43, page 562.

And Connoght pour'd from waste and wood.

Their is in the *Frædera* an invitation to Eth O'Connor, chief of the Irish of Connaught, setting forth that the king was about to move against his Scottish rebels, and therefore requesting the attendance of all the force he could muster, either commanded by himself in person, or by some nobleman of his race.

NOTE 44, page 566.

The Monarch rode along the van.

The English vanguard, commanded by the Earls of Gloucester and Hereford, came in sight of the Scottish army upon the evening of the 23d of June. Bruce was then riding upon a little palfrey, in front of his foremost line, putting his host in order. It was then that the personal encounter took place betwixt him and Sir Henry de Bohun, a gallant English knight, the issue of which had a great effect upon the spirits of both armies.

NOTE 45, page 570.

Pipe-clang and bugle-sound were toss'd.

There is an old tradition, that the well-known Scottish tune of "Hey, tutti, taitti," was Bruce's march at the battle of Bannockburn.

NOTE 46, page 571.

See where yon barefoot Abbot stands.

"Maurice, abbot of Inchaffray, placing himself on an eminence, celebrated mass in sight of the Scottish army."

NOTE 47, page 572.

We'll tame the terrors of their bow.

The English archers commenced the attack with their usual bravery and dexterity. But against a force, whose importance he had learned by fatal experience, Bruce was provided.

NOTE 48, page 572.

Twelve Scottish lives his baldrick bore!

Roger Ascham quotes a similar Scottish proverb, "whereby they give the whole praise of shooting honestly to Englishmen, saying thus, 'that every English archer beareth under his girdle twenty-four Scotcs.'"

NOTE 49, page 573.

Down! down! in headlong overthrow.

It is generally alleged by historians, that the English men-at-arms fell into the hidden snare which Bruce had prepared for them.

NOTE 50, page 573.

And steeds that shriek in agony.

I have been told that this line requires an explanatory note; and, indeed, those who witness the silent patience with which horses submit to the most cruel usage, may be permitted to doubt, that, in moments of sudden and intolerable anguish, they utter a most melancholy cry.

NOTE 51, page 575.

Lord of the Isles, my trust in thee.

When the engagement between the main bodies had lasted some time, Bruce made a decisive movement, by bringing up the Scottish reserve. It is traditionally said, that at this crisis, he addressed the Lord of the Isles in a phrase used as a motto by some of his descendants, "My trust is constant in thee."

NOTE 52, page 576.

To arms they flew,—axe, club, or spear.

The followers of the Scottish camp observed from the Gillies' Hill in the rear, the impression produced upon the English army by the bringing up of the Scottish reserve, and prompted by the enthusiasm of the moment, or the desire of plunder, assumed, in a tumultuary manner, such arms as they found nearest.

NOTES TO TRIERMAIN.

NOTE 1, page 593.

He pass'd red Penrith's Table Round.

A circular intrenchment, about half a mile from Penrith, is thus popularly termed. The circle within the ditch is about one hundred and sixty paces in circumference, with openings, or approaches, directly opposite to each other. As the ditch is on the inner side, it could not be intended for the purpose of defence, and it has reasonably been conjectured, that the enclosure was designed for the solemn exercise of feats of chivalry, and the embankment around for the convenience of the spectators.

NOTE 2, page 593.

Left Mayburgh's mound and stones of power.

Higher up the river Eamont than Arthur's Round Table, is a prodigious enclosure of great antiquity, formed by a collection of stones upon the top of a gently sloping hill, called Mayburgh.

NOTE 3, page 603.

Scattering a shower of fiery dew.

The author has an indistinct recollection of an adventure, somewhat similar to that which is here ascribed to King Arthur, having befallen one of the ancient Kings of Denmark. The horn in which the burning liquor was presented to that Monarch, is said still to be preserved in the Royal Museum at Copenhagen.

NOTE 4, page 605.

*The flower of Chivalry.
There Galad sate with manly grace.*

The characters named in the stanza are all of them more or less distinguished in the romances which treat of King Arthur and his Round Table, and their names are strung together according to the established custom of minstrels upon such occasions.

